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Attachment and Perceived Infidelity of Military Spouses During Active-Duty Members' Deployment

Heather Ann Alvarado
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Heather A. Alvarado

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Review Committee

Dr. Magy Martin, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Rachel Piferi, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Rolande Murray, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2019

Abstract

Attachment and Perceived Infidelity of Military Spouses During Active-Duty Members'

Deployment

by

Heather A. Alvarado

MS, Walden University, 2017

BA, University of Texas at Arlington, 2013

Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Frequent military deployments have been associated with relationship issues for active-duty members, such as marital conflict and infidelity. Previous research has indicated that attachment, communication, and mental health are associated with military marriages' stability during deployment. However, there remains an important gap in the current literature on military marriages regarding perceptions of infidelity (emotional and sexual). Proponents of attachment theory postulate that early attachment experiences facilitate the development of self-perception as well as perceptions of others. From this perspective, the attachment of military spouses is associated with their perceptions of their active-duty spouses engaging in infidelity. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between attachment, as measured by the Adult Attachment Scale, and infidelity perceptions, as measured by the Infidelity Expectations Questionnaire, for military spouses during their active-duty members' deployment. A sample of 178 military spouses was recruited through social media platforms to complete surveys. Correlation analysis and multiple linear regression were conducted to identify the association and strength between attachment scores and infidelity perceptions. Findings indicate that proximity was a challenge due to deployment, during which spouses were continuously faced with communication challenges and feeling detached from the active-duty member. This contribution to existing literature may enhance social-change initiatives by informing education for military couples, providing a basis for attachment and infidelity-related training.

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Dedication

To military spouses: This dissertation is dedicated to all spouses of service members whose commitment to all service personnel and our country is much valued. At times, you are forgotten, but you are also an important force in supporting our active-duty personnel with their mission. Military spouses face many challenges, and your resiliency has been tested. I appreciate both you and your active-duty member, and I have been grateful to have the opportunity to conduct this research.

To my partner in life: You have been my rock, my blackboard in supporting me through this process. You always believed in me and made me feel that my research and my profession is important. I couldn't ask for more in a partner.

To my parents: Scott and Miriam Nichols. May this work honor your dedication to supporting me throughout my life. I never felt less than, and you both always believed that one day I would be a psychologist!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The spouses of the active-duty military face several challenges: They may experience frequent relocations, difficulty in locating jobs, and the uncertainty of deployments (Riggs & Riggs, 2011). Borelli et al. (2014) found that deployments can be challenging for military marriages because military spouses experience limits on communication, paired with the fear that the active-duty member may be harmed. Infidelity is a prevalent issue that has been associated with military deployments, and the fear of infidelity has been shown to influence a military spouse's sexual, social, mental, and emotional well-being (London, Allen, & Wilmoth, 2013). Learning that the active-duty member has had an affair can affect a military spouse's health, potentially contributing to anxiety, depression, distrust, partner violence, and symptoms similar to those of posttraumatic stress disorder (Kelley, Stambaugh, Milletich, Veprinsky, & Snell, 2015).

Infidelity research and research on military spouses have addressed factors related to infidelity among civilian and military spouses, but research is needed to understand this group's perceptions of infidelity. These perceptions of infidelity can include military spouses perceiving that their partners will engage or are engaging in infidelity while they are on deployment (Kachadourian et al., 2015). A majority of research in this area has indicated that both military spouses' and active-duty members' mental health is affected by deployment due to lack of communication (London et al., 2013). In this study, I did

not examine depression and communication because prior research had already shown that both could decrease during deployment (Allen et al., 2012).

The Department of Defense (DOD, 2017) classifies an individual who is legally married to an active-duty member as a *military spouse*. This study identified a military spouse as an individual who is married to an active-duty member serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. This study focused on married individuals, as research has indicated that more than half of military service personnel are married due to the financial benefits that accrue for both spouses, such as an increase in the member's monthly stipend (Hogan & Seifert, 2014). Attachment theory (AT) was used to ground the study's research questions and findings, as it can be used to explain military spouses' emotional attachment toward their active-duty spouses when they are separated from one another. Findings from this study provide knowledge on how relationship issues such as infidelity can impact a military spouse's marital relationship and provide insight into how different perceptions of infidelity may be influenced by the attachment of a military spouse toward an active-duty member. With this knowledge, clinicians can provide nuanced treatment to this population in relation to infidelity.

In this chapter, I discuss how deployments are an influential risk factor for relationship issues in military marriages. I then present the study's purpose, research question, and hypotheses, and I introduce the theoretical basis for this paper, AT. I also include pertinent definitions of terms used throughout the literature review. The assumptions, scope, delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study are also addressed.

Background

Deployment Overview

Deployment is one of the main stressors experienced by military spouses. A *deployment* is a form of military separation in which active-duty members are relocated to a different geographical area from their family for military service (DOD, 2017). In many cases, these members are deployed overseas for periods spanning from 30 consecutive days up to 12 months (DOD, 2015). This type of military separation varies due to many factors, such as the length of deployment, combat- or non-combat-related deployment, and frequency of deployments throughout the active-duty member's career. Furthermore, all of these factors vary based on the branch of service in which the active-duty member is enlisted (Roy et al., 2012).

According to existing research, infidelity or the risk of infidelity strongly affects military spouses and their partners, especially when the active-duty member is deployed (Allen et al., 2012; Cafferky & Shi, 2015). London et al. (2013) found that couples who had military experience were 32.7% more at risk of experiencing instances of infidelity within the marriage compared to couples with no previous military experiences (16.7%). Furthermore, about 50-60% of military couples who received marital therapy admitted to infidelity being a cause—or the cause—of marital strain (London et al., 2013). Reasons for this pattern include the variety of stressors that military couples face, including deployment, combat situations, and frequent separations (Snyder, Balderrama-Durbin, & Fissette, 2012).

Attachment

Borelli et al. (2014) noted military spouses' attachment as an important factor for clinicians to understand in order to facilitate the best therapeutic practices for couples with relationship issues. Attachment can be useful in explaining how individuals respond to stressful situations, especially during separation from their spouses. Research regarding attachment and military spouses has focused on how attachment relations provide security for the relationship, while other research has focused on how attachment can influence negative emotions (Vincenzes, Haddock, & Hickman, 2014). Communication, trust, and honesty provide relationship security for a military spouse (Cafferky & Shi, 2015). Specifically, secure attachment provides an adaptive way for military spouses to cope with separation (Borelli et al., 2013). Attachments are important to understand because individuals cope with separation in different ways, communicate differently based on their attachment to their partners, and perceive their partners' communication and behaviors based on their attachment.

Cafferky and Shi (2015) also noted that secure attachments influence positive communication between spouses, while relationships with other attachment patterns may show negative or limited verbal communication. Communication is an essential foundation for maintaining a marriage, and communication during separation is an influential factor in maintaining an emotional connection. Similarly, researchers have noted that attachment relations are a significant predictor of how military spouses are influenced by deployment (Vincenzes et al., 2014). Individuals who have attachments that are not secure are more likely to experience psychological distress when separated

from active-duty-member spouses, resulting in negative feelings such as anger. Kachadourian et al. (2015) suggested that these attachments, combined with the additional stressors of deployment, may lead to military spouses and active-duty members experiencing more relationship issues. Through this study, I sought to provide knowledge concerning the likelihood that military spouses perceive their partners as engaging in sexual or emotional infidelity during separation by understanding the attachment of the military spouse.

Relationship Issues

Allen, Rhoades, Stanley, Loew, and Markman (2012) noted that infidelity is a common issue experienced by military spouses and active-duty members during separations and suggested some risk factors that contribute to relationship issues. Infidelity has been shown to affect the quality of a marriage, leading to psychological distress and relationship conflicts. It has also been noted in the literature that there are a variety of risk factors related to marital distress and instability that may impact a military spouse (Kachadourian et al., 2015; London et al., 2013). These risk factors include military spouses marrying earlier compared to the general population, the military spouse's partner being injured during deployment, frequent military relocations, and frequent separation (Allen et al., 2012).

Another prominent risk factor that has been studied is the occurrence of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in combat military personnel and how this affects their marital relationships (Knobloch & Theiss, 2012). Research has found that PTSD, which can be a debilitating condition for individuals who experience trauma, can also

result in trauma for family members who interact with a military combat person with PTSD (Knobloch, Ebata, McGlaughlin, & Ogolsky, 2013). Military spouses who have loved ones experiencing PTSD also have an increased risk for psychological distress and relationship issues (Yambo et al., 2016).

Researchers studying infidelity have noted that individuals can perceive different types of infidelity, such as emotional and sexual infidelity (Urooj, Anis-ul-Haque, & Anjum, 2015). Emotional infidelity differs from sexual infidelity in that a betrayal of trust occurs through an emotional connection, as when a person places trust in an individual other than the person's significant other, and may or may not lead a physical encounter. In contrast, sexual infidelity involves physical activity, such as kissing, fondling, or sexual intercourse, with an individual other than one's significant other (London et al., 2013).

Infidelity has been studied in connection to military couples in order to understand the risks and prognosis of mental health issues (Kachadourian et al., 2015; Knobloch et al., 2013; Snyder et al., 2015). Specifically, researchers have compared military couples who have experienced infidelity in their marriage to military couples who were concerned that infidelity could be an issue in their marriage (Kachadourian et al., 2015). These researchers found that both experiences and concerns about infidelity affect the mental health of active-duty members and military spouses. Kachadourian et al. (2015) also noted that military couples who experienced infidelity were more likely to have depressive symptoms than other groups.

Deployment is a factor that many military members and their spouses experience throughout the military members' careers. It is essential to understand the effects of this factor regarding relationship issues to support the union and stability of military families. In attempting to understand the military spouse's perception of sexual and emotional infidelity, examined military spouses' attachment scores and the differences between the perceptions of emotional or sexual infidelity during deployment.

This study focused on how perceptions of emotional and sexual infidelity impact military spouses because previous literature only examined military spouses' attachment and identified sources of marital stress for civilian-military marriages. Additionally, previous researchers have grouped sexual and emotional infidelity into one category (Urooj et al., 2015). By providing information on attachment and the perception of infidelity during military separation, military support programs can better assist couples experiencing issues of infidelity and offer prevention practices. In other words, by examining the differences between different perceptions of infidelity, mental health providers can provide better support for couples with differing infidelity issues. With this knowledge, military support programs can provide therapeutic practices that may decrease many of the negative factors associated with various relationships in a more individualized manner.

Problem Statement

Deployment is an influential factor affecting both military spouses and active-duty members (London et al., 2013). During deployment, military spouses may experience difficulty with coping, negative emotions, inability to communicate with the

active-duty member, and challenges in balancing home roles and work roles (Riggs & Riggs, 2011). Other stressors affecting both military spouses and active-duty members include deployment-related stressors, combat exposure, and financial stress (Marini, Wadsworth, Christ, & Franks, 2017). Further, as a result of the War on Terror that began in 2001, more current military members have experienced more deployments than military members serving during the Gulf War (Committee on the Assessment of the Readjustment Needs of Military Personnel [CARNMP], 2013). From 2010 to the present, 2.1 million service members have been deployed; as a result, more military spouses are also affected by deployment (CARNMP, 2013).

Infidelity has been associated with military deployments and marital conflict, and the fear of infidelity has been shown to influence military spouses' psychological health (London et al., 2013). Thus, research on deployments has noted the importance of spouses maintaining their emotional attachment during separation, but researchers have not explained how emotional attachment is related to relationship issues (Cafferky & Shi, 2015; Vincenzes et al., 2014). Research has also indicated that when one partner commits infidelity, negative effects, such as a decrease in marital quality, stress, and marital separation or divorce, become more likely (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2017). This same research has not indicated how different perceptions of infidelity may affect the marital relationship (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2017; Cafferky & Shi, 2015). However, researchers have stated a need to examine how the perception that a romantic partner is or will commit infidelity can be just as harmful to a romantic relationship as an act of infidelity (Kachadourian et al., 2015).

Moreover, research on attachment has focused on separate relationship issues, such as how attachment can explain marital communication, marital stability, and marital quality (Cafferky & Shi, 2015) but has not addressed attachment of civilian spouses during deployment of their military member. Due to the similarity of concerns between these two areas of the research, there is a clear need to study infidelity within military marriages with respect to the perception of emotional and sexual infidelity and the relationship of attachment. Research has also not examined how an individual's belief that his or her spouse is engaging in infidelity can impact marital stability and the quality of the relationship based on the attachment relationship (Kachadourian et al., 2015). Current research mostly focuses on infidelity rates in connection to military marriages. Therefore, the findings of this study help to fill a gap in the literature by showing the importance of examining the impact of perceptions of emotional and sexual infidelity on a marital relationship (Urooj et al., 2015).

Purpose of the Study

Using a nonexperimental design, this quantitative study examined military spouses' attachment and their perception of sexual and emotional infidelity. The purpose of the quantitative approach was to identify significant differences between the independent variable (IV) of attachment scores (close, anxious, dependent) and the dependent variables (DVs) of perception of sexual infidelity and the perception of emotional infidelity. In this study, *attachment* referred to the emotional connection between the military spouse and active-duty member, and the *perception of infidelity* referred to the military spouse's belief that his or her partner was cheating or had cheated

during deployment. The study examined the perception of infidelity as two separate constructs to observe whether a military spouse's attachment impacted perceptions of emotional and sexual infidelity. Covariate variables (CVs), such as gender and length of deployment, were examined to determine whether they influenced the perception of infidelity and the attachment of military spouses.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ 1: Is there a relationship between attachment and perceived emotional infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed?

H₀₁: There is no relationship between attachment and perceived emotional infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the Adult Attachment Scale (AAS) and the Infidelity Expectations Questionnaire (IEQ).

H_{a1}: There is a relationship between attachment and perceived emotional infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the AAS and the IEQ.

RQ 2: Is there a relationship between attachment and perceived sexual infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed?

H₀₂: There is no relationship between attachment and perceived sexual infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the AAS and the IEQ.

H_{a2}: There is a relationship between attachment and perceived sexual infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the AAS and the IEQ.

A demographics questionnaire was provided to each participant in order to understand the surveyed population in terms of age, ethnicity, education level, and gender as well as the type of deployment experienced by and military branch of the active-duty member in order to examine whether these demographic characteristics had additional significance on different analyses.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The theoretical framework for this study was Bowlby's (1982) AT. Bowlby's theoretical work provides an understanding of how individuals respond when separated from their loved ones. AT was initially used to understand child-adult relationships, but its application has expanded to encompass adult romantic relationships in which partners experience separation and other relationship issues (Bowlby, 1982).

The major propositions of AT are discussed below, and a more detailed examination of AT is presented in Chapter 2. AT begins with understanding the internal working model (IWM) that describes the attachment relationship between parent and child. The IWM refers to how a child perceives him- or herself and his or her attachment figure (parent). These internalizations of the self lead the individual to navigate the attachment relationship positively or negatively (Bowlby, 1982). For example, children who perceive that their parents do not love them or do not provide them with their basic needs may have insecure attachments. Bowlby (1977) also noted

that when the child is separated from the attachment figure, the child will engage in attachment behaviors to maintain proximity to the attachment figure. These same patterns of attachment can be viewed in adult relationships (Allen et al., 2012; Urooj et al., 2015).

Individuals who do not obtain secure models of an attachment may perceive their self-worth in a negative manner, believing that they are not worthy of the affection of the attachment figure. Such thoughts and perceptions influence how an individual responds and behaves toward an attachment figure (Bowlby, 1988). This proposition of AT was applied to the current study's examination of a military spouse's perception that his or her partner may engage in infidelity during deployment and the resulting behavior toward and interactions with the romantic partner. In the current study, the separation was identified as deployment, and attachment behaviors were noted by the AAS to identify the emotional attachment of a military spouse during deployment.

Nature of the Study

In this study, I used a quantitative design to examine significant differences between military spouses' attachment and their perceptions of infidelity during military separation. A quantitative nonexperimental design with probability sampling was conducted to ensure that each participant had an equal chance of being selected. Convenience sampling was used to ensure that appropriate sample size was reached, and a demographic questionnaire was provided to participants to screen for criterion variables such as age, deployment, and military affiliation (Appendix C). A nonexperimental design was chosen so that attachment (IV) would not be manipulated, and participants

were designated by attachment scores with the use of a standardized survey instrument. The IV of attachment was measured using the AAS, and the DV of perception of infidelity was measured by using the IEQ. The use of these quantitative measures provided a score based on the participants' answers and identified each participant by attachment scores and the likelihood of perception of infidelity.

Bowlby's AT, which indicates how attachment provides insight into individuals' perceptions of their attachment figure, provided a framework that kept the study's focus on the military spouses' perception of emotional or sexual infidelity by the active-duty member. Self-report surveys were used due to the ease of data collection and the valuable insight they provided into the constructs of attachment and perceptions of infidelity (Creswell, 2009).

Military spouses were recruited through probability and convenience sampling, which included online recruitment methods. The self-report surveys were administered to military spouses who had experienced a deployment, who completed the AAS and IEQ (Appendices C and D). After completing these questionnaires, military spouses were identified according to their attachment and their likelihood of perceiving their active-duty member as engaging in sexual or emotional infidelity. Then, the data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and multiple regression analysis and regression procedures were used to provide insight into the relationship between attachment and perceptions of infidelity. The multiple regression procedures allowed for the IV to be an interval variable by providing a score indicating the participants by attachment.

Definition of Terms

Perception of infidelity: Perception of infidelity is an individual's belief/perception that his or her partner has engaged or will engage in sexual or emotional infidelity (Kachadourian et al., 2015). *Sexual infidelity* entails engaging in a sexual act with someone other than the spouse. Sexual acts may include fondling, kissing, sexual intercourse, or cuddling. In contrast, *emotional infidelity* may occur when the partner trusts, confides in or converses with someone other than the military spouse (Urooj et al., 2015).

Attachment: Attachment refers to the specific bond or attachment that an individual has with another that denotes the security and trust of the relationship (Bowlby, 1977).

Military spouses: Military spouses are individuals who are legally married to active-duty personnel. Military spouses can also be referred to as *military wives* or *spouses of military members and veterans* (Snyder, Balderrama-Durbin, & Fissette, 2012). In this study, I primarily use the term *military spouse* to include both males and females. Overall demographic data for military spouses show that military spouses include more females than males (Riggs & Riggs, 2011).

Deployment: Deployment refers to active-duty personnel being assigned to a duty station for an extended period that differs significantly from the personnel's home residence. Deployments can vary from 1 month to over a year (Riggs & Riggs, 2011).

Assumptions

There were several assumptions inherent in this study. One assumption was that the use of probability sampling provided an equal chance of being able to participate in the study. It was assumed that participants who volunteered for this study did not intentionally bias the results. It was also assumed that participants understood the informed consent disclosure and gave appropriate answers to the questions asked of them. These were necessary assumptions to identify the study's reliability and validity of the research questions.

Another assumption was that, due to the nature of research questions, a nonexperimental design should be chosen. Specifically, it was assumed that the IV of attachment could not be manipulated; therefore, it can be viewed as an interval variable (Creswell, 2009). Thus, with the selection of nonexperimental design, it was assumed that, due to the lack of control of the IV, there could be other variables not assessed in the study that might cause influential and significant differences (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2014).

Finally, it was assumed that the perception of infidelity could influence a marital relationship. Research has consistently shown that the act of infidelity and the belief that one's partner will engage in infidelity have similar negative effects on romantic relationships. Thus, I drew upon assumptions from the literature in this study, believing that the perception of infidelity may be impacted by the attachment of the military spouse (London et al., 2013).

Scope and Delimitations

In the current study, I examined the relationship between attachment and the perception of infidelity using the AAS and IEQ. This relationship was identified as an area of professional research that had been overlooked and not previously investigated. Allen et al. (2012) stated that a good portion of research on infidelity had focused on the occurrence of infidelity in marriages. In contrast, other factors can hurt a military marriage, such as the military spouse perceiving that his or her partner may engage in infidelity, and this perception has been noted to be as detrimental as actual infidelity to a marital relationship (Kachadourian et al., 2015).

Internal validity refers to how accurately research is conducted to limit the chances of any potential confounding variables within a study (Creswell, 2009). In the current study, I limited issues with internal validity by also examining covariates that had been discussed in previous literature. Additionally, internal validity was protected by the explanation of how attachment and the perception of infidelity are interrelated variables as defined by AT.

External validity refers to the results of possible application to the general population (Creswell, 2009). In the current study, military spouses were the studied population. This population is unique because its members are defined as individuals who are legally married to active-duty military personnel. The results of the study are only generalizable to other military spouses who are married to someone in the U. S. Armed Forces. Thus, the results of the study do not apply to the marriages of the general

population, as members of the general population will most likely not have experienced the unique factors affecting military marriages.

This study included the factor of deployment, which has been noted to be a major influencer on military marriages as it causes frequent separations (in both combat and noncombat situations; Borelli, 2014; Borelli et al., 2013). In research on deployments, infidelity has been noted as a common issue that occurs within military marriages due to the distinct stressors experienced by this population (Cafferky & Shi, 2015). In the primary literature, the focus has been on acts of infidelity. This study asserted that the perception of infidelity could be just as harmful. This study examined the perception of infidelity through a standardized survey that included perceptions of both sexual and emotional infidelity (Kachadourian et al., 2015). The survey used in the study focused on sexual or emotional infidelity perceptions of the participant, thus identifying if the military spouse perceived that the active-duty member engaged in either act of infidelity.

One of the boundaries of the study involved the inclusion of specific types of military spouses. Previous studies have noted that the majority of military spouses are female (DOD, 2015). Thus, I did not expect this study to include a large sample of male participants. Other demographics such as sexual orientation were not included in this study because same-sex military relationships are less likely to be accepted in this population; however, this may be a population that is crucial to future research (London et al., 2013). The results of this study may apply to or be replicated in future research on other populations that experience frequent marital separations as a result of job

obligations, such as businesspersons, truck drivers, pilots, and firefighters (Fincham & May 2017).

Limitations

Limitations may be viewed within the research methodology, design, and potential biases of this study. One limitation of methodology and design is that, due to the nonexperimental nature of the study, the research could not control for the effects of the IV (Creswell, 2009). Another potential limitation that possibly affected its internal validity was the use of the intended online data collection method. A limitation to online surveying is that individuals may not understand the questions or information presented to them, whereas face-to-face contact provides the ability to communicate understanding. Thus, potential biases from participants in answering the questions may have affected internal validity.

Moreover, online surveying provides ease of data collection, but in some instances, online participants may answer quickly due to the convenience, making their responses inaccurate. Additionally, there was an opportunity for response or recall bias, as some participants may have wanted to choose answers they perceived as favorable, rather than providing honest, accurate answers (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, time constraints or restrictions on the participants may have affected their responses, along with the sensitive nature of the topic of infidelity and other environmental forces.

Due to the lack of face-to-face communication, there was the possibility that some of the participants did not meet the necessary criteria (i.e., being a spouse of an active-duty member and having experience deployment) to participate in the study. Further,

including only military spouses who had experienced a partner's deployment limited the study. It would have been more beneficial to identify spouses who were experiencing a deployment at the time to gather more accurate information on their infidelity perceptions. However, this would have required a long process that was outside the scope and time constraints of this study. This affected external validity, in that the current study involved asking participants to recollect their experiences from deployment. This limitation is noted in the discussion of the results in Chapters 4 and 5.

Significance of the Study

It is important to assess the relationship between military spouses' perceptions of different types of infidelity, such as emotional versus sexual, and their attachment, as prior research has indicated that perceptions of infidelity alone can affect relationships (Kachadourian et al., 2015). In this study, I used AT in examining how the perception of infidelity explains the emotional connection of a military spouse with his or her romantic partner. Additionally, in seeking to answer the research questions, I explored how the strength of emotional attachment affects how a partner interacts with his or her spouse, adding to the body of literature on AT. The results of this study provide additional knowledge of the importance of AT in romantic relationships for therapeutic practices. For example, clinicians can facilitate education on infidelity perceptions, potentially harming the marital relationship. The study's results may assist military clinicians in

identifying military spouses' attachment and thereby help them to preserve marital relationships pre- and postdeployment.

The study has implications for positive social change at the individual, familial, global, and societal levels. At the individual and familial level, this study can support military marriages by identifying how perceptions of infidelity are harmful to a marital relationship. Clinicians can work at the individual level with military couples to strengthen the attachment bond for participants with insecure/anxious attachments. Further, at the societal level, those developing clinical practices may be able to use the knowledge from this study to support the implementation of programs unique to different types of infidelity issues and provide support to military spouses and active-duty members in the hope of preventing relationship issues that may end in marital conflict or divorce (Laser & Stephen, 2011; London et al., 2013).

Summary

Chapter 1 includes the background for this study, demonstrating that the relationship between attachment and perception of infidelity in military spouses needs to be further examined. According to AT, individuals develop attachment in relation to their perception of themselves and how they perceive their attachment figures; this process needs to be further examined in military spouses, as it may predict their perceptions of their active-duty member engaging in infidelity during deployment. These continued perceptions may cause marital conflict for partners.

In Chapter 1, the distinctions between the military spouse and the active member were discussed, along with the understanding of deployment as an important factor

affecting this population. Also presented in this chapter was a brief overview of AT, the guiding theoretical basis for this study. Additionally, I discussed the nature of the study and the variables, which consisted of attachment and perception of infidelity.

Additionally, key definitions, assumptions, and limitations were outlined.

In Chapter 2, I provide a more comprehensive overview of AT, further explicating the nature of attachment in connection to the perception of infidelity within a marriage. A detailed review of the existing literature on deployment length, type of deployment, deployment cycle, and infidelity issues within military marriages is also presented. Additionally, I discuss the role of attachment in military marriages, which can explain the emotional connections between individuals in military marriages, especially marriages that are impacted by external factors such as deployment, combat exposure, and communication issues. In the next chapter, I focus on how attachment has been discussed in the literature in regard to military marriages and examine the specific infidelity issues in this population.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Little is known about military spouses' perceptions of infidelity during their active-duty members' deployment. As discussed in Chapter 1, most research in this area has focused on infidelity acts, not on perceptions of infidelity. The purpose of the study was to examine how military spouses' attachment is associated with the perception of emotional or sexual infidelity during a romantic partner's deployment. The study's purpose was to identify whether military spouses' attachment may be a predictor of their perceptions of possible infidelity. In this literature review, I discuss research on common stressful factors experienced by military spouses who are married to active-duty members.

One of these stressors is deployment (Riviere, Merrill, Thomas, Wilk, & Bliese, 2012). Deployment can be a challenging time for military spouses, who may experience limits on communication, separation anxiety, and uncertainty concerning the safety of the active-duty member (Balderrama-Durbin, Erbes, Polusny, & Vogt, 2018; Knobloch et al., 2013). Due to this forced separation, attachment becomes an essential factor to consider in order to understand the emotional connection to the military spouse when the active-duty member is deployed (Cafferky & Shi, 2015).

Infidelity during separation has been highlighted as a common experience within this population (Foran, Heyman, Slep, & Snarr, 2012; Knobloch et al., 2016).

Balderrama-Durbin, Erbes, Polusny, and Vogt (2017) noted how not only the act of infidelity but also the thought that the partner will engage in the act of infidelity could be

detrimental to the romantic relationship in a marriage. There remains a lack of research on specific infidelity issues such as emotional and sexual infidelity and military spouses (Kachadourian et al., 2015).

This chapter begins with the methods used to locate relevant literature. A brief review of Bowlby's AT is followed by a review of the current literature on AT and related influential variables pertinent to military couples' relationships. The literature encompasses the length of deployment, type of deployment, cycle of deployment, attachment, specific relationship issues, infidelity prevalence, and perceptions of infidelity. I also discuss risk factors for deployment, such as longer deployments and impact of combat and noncombat deployment on this population. Finally, attachment is outlined as a primary way to understand the emotional connection between the military spouse and the attachment figure.

Literature Review Strategy

The following Walden University databases were used to find relevant literature: PsychInfo, PsycArticles, SocioIndex with Full Text, Military and Government Collection, and Academic Search Complete. Google Scholar was an additional database used to search specific terms and populations of interest for this study. With PsychInfo, I used the following search terms: *attachment*, *detachment*, and *emotional attachment*. The second group of key search terms was designated for covariates (CVs) and included *military marriage*, *military*, *military spouse*, *military wives*, *gender*, *age*, *education*, and *deployment*. When using PsycArticles, I conducted searches with the terms *attachment*, *attachment style*, *detachment*, and *emotional attachment*. The next group of key search

terms was designated for criterion variables as well as the specific variables of interest, which included *deployment, combat exposure, infidelity, and military*. When using SocioIndex, I searched for the terms *military spouse, military couples, military, and military wives*.

The next group of key search terms was designated for the dependent variables (DVs), which included *infidelity, cheating, extramarital affair, and deployment*. Lastly, in the Military and Government Collection and Academic Search Complete, the search terms *military marriage, military, military spouse, and military wives* were used. The other key search terms were also *infidelity, perception of infidelity, infidelity expectations, relationship issues, cheating, and extramarital affairs*.

Dissertations were excluded from the literature review. The review included only encompassed research published within the last 6 years, such as military/government documents, peer-reviewed articles, and full-text studies, to provide an accurate statement of the problem and research current needs. Through this method, it was apparent that there was substantial research concerning infidelity among military couples, whereas research on the perception or belief that a spouse will engage in infidelity was limited. From the research, I also isolated the need to examine perceptions of emotional and sexual infidelity separately instead of examining infidelity perceptions in a broad context.

Attachment Theory: Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was AT, which was proposed by Bowlby (1969). AT is grounded in the understanding that early life experiences affect individuals' current or adult relationships (Bowlby, 1982). The origins of this theory

emerged from ecological theory, in which biological experiences, such as an early attachment to the mother, constitute an essential part of the development and inform all other attachment relations (Berk, 2012). In the present study, AT helped to explain the behaviors of military spouses during deployment, as their IWMs were influenced by being separated from the active-duty member.

Bowlby (1969) suggested that infants need attachment from their caregivers, and the quality of the attachment is influenced by the level of responsiveness of the caregiver. The first tenet of AT is an understanding of the basis for the internal working theory (IWT) of attachment (Bowlby, 1977). This theory highlights how, importantly, attachment provides a basis for bonding experiences and social interactions. Moreover, IWT involves conjecture about how an individual makes (internal) perceptions of the “self” and the attachment figure. These internal perceptions are moderated by how the attachment figure provides for the infant’s basic needs, such as food, safety, and attention. The more the attachment figure attends to the infant, the better the child’s IWM becomes. Individuals who are neglected or not provided with these basic needs will learn that their parents, and other individuals, may not care for them (Bowlby, 1982).

Bowlby (1969) stated that an individual continually attempts to maintain proximity to the attachment figure. Infants who are not able to maintain this proximity experience anxiety, separation, fear, distrust, and insecurity. Bowlby (1988) proposed that the inability to regulate physical proximity to the attachment figure can result in detachment and protests toward the attachment figure.

Ainsworth (1978) also added to literature in AT by discussing three different attachment styles: secure, anxious, and avoidant. According to Ainsworth, securely attached individuals develop a sense of security and trust with their attachment figure. In Ainsworth's formulation, insecure attachment styles are divided into two groups: insecure-anxious and insecure-avoidant. Individuals with anxious and avoidant styles display insecurity concerning self and others as well as distrust; however, these avoidant styles differ in the display of emotional distancing from the attachment figure (Berk, 2012). For example, individuals with insecure attachments may be more likely to emotionally detach from their attachment figure, which affects further bonding and trust within the relationship.

Researchers have extended the application of AT from the early-learning context of childhood experiences to adult experiences (Marchand-Reilly, 2012; Pielage, Luteijn, & Arrindell, 2005). AT has also been widely used in research on couples who experience some form of separation (Knobloch et al., 2016; Riggs & Riggs, 2011). Military couples are a unique population that is subject to frequent separation as a result of military duty. In connection with this unique population, AT has been used to understand the nature of deployments and patterns viewed in the military spouse's connection to the active-duty member (Vincenzes et al., 2014). Borelli et al. (2014) stated that emotional detachment might occur during deployment, affecting the spouse's well-being and the stability of the romantic relationship. They also discussed how emotional detachment had been noted with spouses in which they exhibited avoidance behaviors (limited verbal communication) during separation, which increased the risk that an individual would

experience anxiety (Borelli et al., 2014). Research has suggested that military spouses may experience fears that their partner will engage in infidelity or feelings of insecurity within the romantic relationship, which may lead to insecure attachment (Kachadourian et al., 2015). This pattern also aligns with AT due to how internal perceptions of self impact the strength of the attachment bond between individual and attachment figures (Bowlby, 1982).

Military spouses may emotionally detach from the marital relationship to cope with the separation as well as to focus on maintaining the stability of family and financial roles (Riggs & Riggs, 2011). On the other hand, interdependence may also be achieved by the military spouse maintaining the romantic relationship by speaking with the active-duty member or providing support, which strengthens the emotional connection between the couple (Cafferky & Shi, 2015).

AT can also provide an understanding of the impact that deployment has on military spouses. Vincenzes et al. (2014) stated that separation anxiety is typically experienced in the deployment period, during which the military spouse regulates closeness to the active-duty member. They suggested that deployments that are longer have been associated with increased risks for psychological distress and the potential for relationship issues to occur between the military spouse and the active-duty member (Vincenzes et al., 2014).

Furthermore, AT has been used to understand the occurrence of relationship issues such as divorce, infidelity, and communication problems (Allen et al., 2012). As previously described, AT focuses on the idea of the IWM between the individual and the

attachment figure. Attachments that are not secure may be more prone to relationship issues due to an individual experiencing feelings of uncertainty and not engaging in the maintenance of the relationship (Borelli et al. 2014). The IWM of AT can be related to this study in that the internal perceptions of the military spouse, such as feeling secure and loved within the relationship, can be attributed to feeling secure that his/her spouse will not commit infidelity (Allen et al., 2012; Bowlby, 1988; Kachadourian et al., 2015). Similarly, the IWM can also provide an understanding of the external perceptions of the military spouse regarding how the active-duty member feels within the romantic relationship. If the military spouse feels that the spouse does not feel a loving or secure relationship, then relationship issues may occur (Bowlby, 1969).

The relationship turbulence model has been used extensively with AT to understand instances of separation. This model indicates that romantic relationships are faced with challenges when a new stressor or change in the environment occurs (Knobloch & Theiss, 2012). As stated previously, military couples constitute a unique population that experiences frequent changes. Thus, in this study, AT was used to examine military spouses' attachment toward their romantic partners during deployment to understand the perception of emotional or sexual infidelity. Research has shown that attachment is a major component of the emotional connection between partners, especially during some form of sexual separation (Kachadourian et al., 2015). Moreover, researchers have noted that, in some instances, emotional detachment from a romantic partner may occur when one partner is not communicating with or supporting the other

partner (Cafferky & Shi, 2015). In such events, attachment behaviors have been noted to increase risks of infidelity (Borelli et al., 2013; Kachadourain et al., 2015).

Literature Review Related to Key Variables

In the section that follows, I discuss the impact of deployment on the military spouse's psychological health and the marital relationship. The deployment period has been noted as a challenging and stressful time for both the military spouse and the active-duty member. The challenges are primarily caused by environmental changes due to the active-duty member leaving home, at which point the military spouse becomes responsible for managing a household, children, and financial matters as well as coping with the possibility of his or her spouse being in danger while being unable to communicate with him or her, as presented in Figure 1.

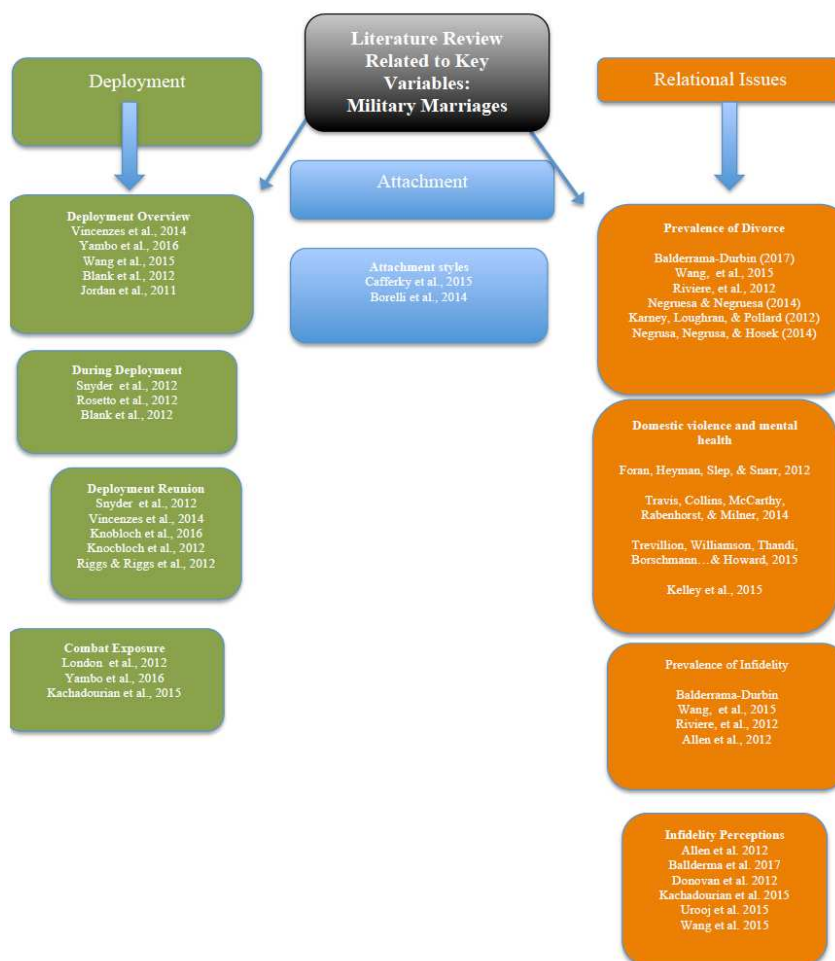


Figure 1. A literature matrix of factors associated with deployments and civilian spouses' relationships with their active-duty members.

Military Marriages

Military marriages are unique in that they differ from most civilian marriages. Those in military marriages are subject to many stressors, such as frequent relocations, a partner's possible exposure to combat, and limited communication between spouses (Gleason & Beck, 2017). As of 2016, there were 1,288,596 active-duty members in the U.S. military (DOD, 2016). Of these active-duty members, 53.5% were married, and 6.6% were in dual-military marriages, meaning that both spouses served in the military

(DOD, 2016). Within the Armed Services Reserves and the National Guard, there were another 818,305 military marriages (DOD, 2016).

Deployment Overview

Deployment was an important variable to consider within this study due to the interest in viewing the separation of the military spouse from the romantic partner. A deployment can last anywhere from 1 month to 12 months. Extended deployments can range from 12 months to 18 months (Jordan, 2011). Deployments are events in which the active-duty member engages in duty-related activities that require physical relocation from his or her duty station. In many cases, deployments occur outside the United States, but they can also occur within the country. The nature of deployment is challenging, as the military spouse must adapt to a new environment without his or her romantic partner. In these cases, military spouses may have difficulty communicating with their loved ones and may need to take on the responsibilities of the household, both financial and maintenance (Cafferky & Shi, 2015). These added roles can cause stress and strain on the romantic relationship (Knobloch et al., 2016).

Deployment can have significant effects on active-duty members and military spouses. Wang et al. (2015) noted some negative associations of deployment that can influence military marriage, such as drug-seeking behavior, aggressive behaviors, and mental health issues. Factors such as infidelity, anxiety, PTSD, depression, and substance use problems have also been associated with difficulties during deployment and post-deployment. Other negative effects of deployment include negative emotional states in which the military spouse experiences anger or resentment toward the active-duty

member. Military spouses are more prone to distress and negative emotional states during deployments that exceed 6 months (Vincenzen et al., 2014). Therefore, the length of deployment is also associated with the well-being of the military spouse.

Blank et al. (2012) also noted how psychological distress is connected to the length of deployment as well as a spouse's uncertainty concerning the safety of the active-duty member, lack of control, caring for household and children, and limited communication with the active-duty member. Military spouses and active-duty members have also been found to display depressive symptoms before deployment; as a result, research has found associations between the lower amounts of perceived social support, negative adaption to stress, and higher depressive symptoms (Marini, Wadsworth, Christ, & Frank, 2017). Other challenges noted in the literature include parenting, reintegrating into the family routine, revising roles and responsibilities, coping with work and financial issues, communication, reconnecting, and dealing with changes in personality and emotion (Riggs & Riggs, 2011; Wang et al., 2015). Not all of these factors are always observed, but usually, there is a combination of these factors within military couples' relationships before and after a deployment.

During Deployment

The literature also emphasized that there are different stages of deployment, and each stage may have a significant effect on the sexual and mental health of the spouse and patterns of communication with the active-duty member (Knobloch et al., 2013). Further, the levels of stressors may be impacted during points within the deployment cycle's three phases: (1) pre-deployment, (2) deployment, and (3) postdeployment (Riggs

& Riggs, 2012). The pre-deployment phase is the preparation for the active-duty member to be away from the family during which roles are reversed, and more responsibilities for the partner-at-home are discussed. In the deployment period, when the active-duty member is physically relocated to his/her duty station, family contact may be limited (Blank et al., 2012). Lastly, the postdeployment period is the timeframe in which the active-duty member returns from deployment; subsequently, this timeframe can take place anywhere from one day to one year upon return (Vincenzes et al., 2014).

Many studies focus on the experiences of a military spouse when the active-duty member is deployed (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2018). This period provides valuable insight into how the military spouse copes with the separation from the active-duty member. Blank et al. (2012) noted that there are positive and negative forms of coping during deployment; as a result, coping has been associated with better reintegration of the family after deployment and fewer instances of relationship issues (Riggs & Riggs, 2011). Some coping skills that have been associated with the adaptive processing of deployment are confrontative, optimistic, and supporting styles (Blank et al., 2012).

Researchers also noted coping as an essential part of the military spouse maintaining the marriage relationship and his/her psychological well-being during the deployment process (Cafferky & Shi, 2015). In their study, Rea, Behnke, Huff, and Allen (2015) focused on online communication as a positive influence that allowed the military spouse to cope with the separation from the active-duty member. The role of online communication, such as Facebook or other social media, has been associated with higher

levels of social support for individuals and individuals' better adaption to the deployment process (Rea, Behnke, Huff, & Allen, 2015).

Communication needs differ from the active-duty member to the military spouse; consequently, active-duty members value reassurance and support while military spouses value problem solving and disclosure (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2017). Other researchers highlighted positive coping styles that strengthen the emotional bond between a military couple (Knobloch et al., 2016). Some styles that have been displayed as beneficial for the marital relationship are open communication, future planning, the reassurance of the safety of active-duty members, and topic avoidance (Rosetto et al., 2013). On the other hand, maladaptive coping may be associated with experiences of relationship problems (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2017). Interestingly, infidelity is a common relational issue and is most commonly experienced during the deployment period (Synder et al., 2012).

Deployment Reunion

During the reunion period, when active-duty members are reintegrated into civilian life, there is potential for active-duty members to experience stress-related mental health issues. Balderrama-Durbin et al. (2015) suggested that issues related to a majority of combat-related experiences during deployment have a significant effect on the mental health of the active-duty member and the military spouse. The more stressors within the romantic relationship create a higher prevalence of marital strain, which has been associated with relationship issues such as infidelity (Synder et al., 2012).

Another factor to consider during the deployment reunion phase are changes within the emotional connection of the military spouse. Upon return from deployment,

combat-exposed soldiers may struggle with the disclosure of combat experiences, which may limit communication between both spouses. Additionally, upon return, soldiers may struggle with not feeling needed due to the responsibilities of the home having been maintained by the military spouse (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2015). Balderrama-Durbin et al. (2015) also argued that military spouses face similar challenges in which they must re-adjust their home and life routines and struggle with how to reconnect to active-duty members who have been exposed to combat. Denial or detachment are common emotional experiences of the military spouse, and these emotional states may have an impact on the marital relationship (Cafferky & Shi, 2015). These emotional experiences are utilized as a coping mechanism to re-integrate the active-duty member back to home life. In some instances, the emotional connection may be influenced by continued negative emotional states; as a result, communication, co-parenting, and marital intimacy may be affected (Vincenzes et al., 2014).

Researchers have also noted that relationship turbulence is a common experience during the reunion period (Knobloch et al., 2012). Deployment is considered a stressful time when some conflict within the romantic relationship is expected. Knobloch, Ebata, McGlaughlin, and Ogolsky (2013) stated that relationship uncertainty and depressive symptoms are significantly related; as a result, military spouses who perceive uncertainty in their marriage are more likely to experience depressive symptoms. Furthermore, military spouses with higher relationship uncertainty communicated less with the active-duty member, thereby increasing more relationship issues (Knobloch et al., 2012). Also, military spouses face relationship uncertainty when they are unsure of how to continue

communication with the active-duty member as well as how to maintain sexual and emotional intimacy. Additionally, family roles change with the re-inclusion of the active-duty member, so the family must renegotiate finances, parenting roles, home life, and other familial roles (Knobloch et al., 2016).

Combat Exposure

As stated previously, deployment can vary in length and the location of duty for the active-duty member. Researchers have noted two different forms of deployment: combat-exposure and non-combat exposure (Kelley et al., 2015). Depending on the needs of the military, active-duty members may experience combat-related war zones areas during wartime (London et al., 2012). However, some deployments are specific to the active-duty member's job, not combat. These deployments do not have wartime related stressors, but the inability to communicate 'back home' may remain on top of the long periods away from home (Kachadourian et al., 2015).

Researchers have noted that deployments with combat exposure influence both the active-duty member and military spouse. Some active-duty members may return home with a stress-related illness due to emotional or sexual trauma experienced in combat. In these instances, a military spouse also faces challenges in reconnecting with the active-duty member, difficulty managing home and life roles without the support of active-duty members, and instances of stress due to the unpredictable nature of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Yambo et al., 2016).

Active-duty members may also have difficulty readjusting and adapting to home life after being on combat duty readiness (Kelly et al., 2015). These added stressors of

stress-related illness on the marital relationship have been associated with higher levels of relationship problems, such as infidelity. Kachadourain et al. (2015) found that military spouses and active-duty members who experience their partner being unfaithful during or after deployment have higher perceived stress levels, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. These researchers also suggested that the act of infidelity can also be viewed as a traumatic event in which the military spouse or active-duty member may experience PTSD symptomology.

Attachment

Coping has been an essential part of understanding the adaptive qualities of military spouses. Cafferky and Shi (2015) found that maintaining the emotional connection during deployment is best understood by coping styles, but the attachment relationship between the military spouse and the active-duty member may also play a role. Cafferky and Shi identified three patterns of coping that coincide with the attachments of the military spouse. The first two patterns involved the military spouse emotionally distancing him-/herself within the romantic relationship to preserve his/her well-being while also attempting to remain close to his/her partners but feeling that these efforts were hopeless. These patterns resemble anxious and avoidant attachment behaviors. Borelli et al. (2014) have noted that individuals with avoidant attachments are more likely to engage in attachment avoidance when separated from their attachment figure. Attachment avoidance has been implicated in individuals' exposure to marital strain as these individuals avoid thinking of the marital relationship due to stress (Marchand-Reilly, 2012). Avoidance can impact the reintegration of the active-duty

member back into the family upon his/her return and minimize the risk of deployment, but avoidance also means the individual is engaging in negative emotional regulation strategies.

The last pattern of Borelli et al.'s (2014) study discussed military spouses that drew on and facilitated the strength of the emotional connection through communication. These individuals reported high emotional well-being, thus resembling a secure attachment when separated from their partners (Borelli et al., 2013). Positive forms of communication are associated with a secure military spouse as the civilian and military spouses utilize language that displays them a single unit, such as the use of we talk. The use of we talk and similar communication patterns have been associated with higher levels of marital satisfaction (Borelli et al., 2014). In contrast, individuals who do not engage in positive forms of communication during deployment generally have an emotional attachment that is not nurtured, strengthened, and stabilized, thus leading to higher instances of the military couple experiencing marital issues (Borelli et al., 2013; Donovan, & Emmers-Sommer, 2012).

Relationship Issues

Prevalence of divorce. As previously discussed, military marriages experience a multitude of stressors, and in some instances, this can decrease the stability of the marital relationship. Karney, Loughran, and Pollard (2012) suggested that there is a pattern within military marriages that increases the risk of divorce, which seems likely as older service members are more likely to be divorced (Karney, Loughran, & Pollard, 2012). A potential reason for this trend is that the long years of service are correlated with more

military stressors that impact the stability of a marriage. Research has also found a relationship in the length of service and decreased marital quality (Knobloch et al., 2013). According to the literature, decreased marital quality is associated with higher probabilities of military couples experiencing marital dissolution as well as reports of infidelity (Riviere et al., 2012).

Another pattern that has been noted in research is the timing of the deployment and the type of deployment experienced. Negrusa, Negrusa, and Hosek (2014) noted in 2001 that the divorce rates had decreased among military couples, but in 2002, an increase of divorce was observed. Some potential reasons for this pattern are that deployments became more frequent after 2000, and these deployments were more likely to be dangerous as many were to combat-exposed environments (Negrusa, Negrusa, & Hosek, 2014).

Divorce is another component to understand since there may be some adverse effects on individuals who experience this relationship issue. Interestingly, active-duty members who have experienced divorce are also more likely to experience multiple deployments. Specifically, individuals who are divorced have had prior deployments but are also more likely to deploy after being divorced as well (Karney et al., 2012; Kelley et al., 2015). Divorce has been associated with negative health outcomes such as PTSD, depression, smoking initiation, binge drinking, alcohol-related problems, and moderate weight gain (Wang et al., 2015). One of the major negative health effects extensively studied in connection to deployments is PTSD and its role in marital relationships. Research has found that Army personnel who have been diagnosed with PTSD or display

symptoms of PTSD are more likely to experience relationship issues, specifically divorce (Foran et al., 2012; Marini et al., 2017). Also, it has been found in the research that more female soldiers experience divorce than their male counterparts (Negrusa & Negrusa, 2014).

Research has suggested that in the postdeployment phase, there is a higher incidence of intent to divorce (Welsh, Olson, & Perkins, 2015). These rates are even higher with active-duty members who have healthy mental symptoms but display aggressive behaviors. Welsh et al. (2015) found that when comparing four months after deployment versus nine months after deployment, individuals after nine months have a higher divorce intent. This research suggests that military marriages need social and emotional support after deployments (Foran, Wright, & Wood, 2013).

The length of deployment and the amount of combat exposure leads to a potential risk for some military marriages. Other research has attempted to understand the factors that lead to divorce in military marriages (Kelley et al., 2015; Knobloch et al., 2015). Specifically, Balderrama-Durbin et al. (2017) suggested that other issues may be at play with these incidences of divorce. Some of the potential factors that have been associated with divorce are domestic violence, infidelity, and mental health concerns (Kachadourian et al., 2015; Negrusa & Negrusa, 2014).

Domestic violence and mental health. In the previous sections, the mental health of an individual has been noted as a factor that affects not only the individual but also the quality of the marriage. Researchers have also noted that acts of domestic violence impact marital quality and the intent of an individual to divorce (Foran, Heyman, Slep, &

Snarr, 2012). Domestic violence can occur in physical, sexual, or emotional forms that cause undue harm to an individual. In the military branches, from 2008 to 2011, about 53% of domestic violence was physical, 32% was emotional, and 45% was indicated as sexual (Travis et al., 2014). In viewing domestic violence in military marriages, there has been a significant relationship with the perpetrator having some mental health concerns (Kelley et al., 2015). One of the primary mental health outcomes associated with domestic violence in military marriages is active-duty members experiencing PTSD. Overall, the perpetrators of domestic abuse in military marriages tend to be males who are displaying PTSD symptoms (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2018). Other mental health outcomes have been associated with domestic violence, such as high rates of depression (Trevillion et al., 2015).

PTSD has primarily been noted as a mental health concern for active-duty personnel due to the levels of stressors experienced by this population. One of the major stressors associated with its development is combat exposure during deployment (Wang et al., 2015). Active-duty members have challenges when returning home from deployment in re-connecting with family members and reintegrating back into non-combat activities (Knobloch et al., 2013). Domestic violence among military marriages is more commonly observed within the 10 months following a deployment (Kelley et al., 2015). In some instances, active-duty personnel who experience PTSD symptoms also engage in different coping mechanisms. One coping mechanism commonly observed with this population is negative coping through substance use (Travis et al., 2014). Substance use is used as a way to distract the individual from the traumatic memories,

and this coping skill has been noted as an associated risk factor for these individuals engaging in domestic violence (Foran, Heyman, Slep, & Snarr, 2012).

Prevalence of infidelity and infidelity perceptions. Kachadourain et al. (2015) noted that couples who have been exposed to military service are twice as likely to experience a relationship issue such as infidelity. Prior research has also noted that there are different types of infidelity to be considered, such as the sexual and emotional aspects of infidelity (Urooj et al., 2015). Research on infidelity has also noted risk factors that may contribute to infidelity. For example, previous experience with deployments, the couple taking steps towards divorce, and relationship issues before deployment are influential factors that can lead to infidelity; as result infidelity is noted as a contributing factor to divorce among military couples (Allen et al., 2012; Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2017). The added sexual and emotional strain of deployment affects not only the active-duty member but also the military spouse (Cafferky & Shi, 2015). Research has noted that the prevalence of infidelity coincides with increased probabilities of divorce for military couples. Typically, these associations are higher among military couples who experience combat-related stressors, such as the active-duty member having a traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or a substance-related issue (Wang et al., 2015).

Allen et al. (2012) discussed how the prevalence of infidelity in military couples correlates with these couples experiencing a decrease in marital quality and overall marital satisfaction. Research on infidelity during deployment has also noted that younger couples are more prone to experience an instance of infidelity. It is implied that, as a

decrease in marital quality occurs, the probability of relationship issues, such as divorce or infidelity, increases (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2017).

The literature review has emphasized many of factors that can lead to stress for military spouses during deployment. Furthermore, researchers have noted that these stressors have an influential factor on the military couple experiencing relationship issues (Knobloch & Theiss, 2012). Research on infidelity has noted the prevalence and risk factors for these occurrences, but the perception of infidelity is an area for further research (Kachadourian et al., 2015). Some researchers have focused on how each partner will perceive their partner engaging infidelity even though there has not been an instance of this relationship issue. Urooj et al. (2012) noted differences between females and males in perceiving their partner engaging infidelity. For example, females are more likely to report that they believe their partner may engage in both sexual and emotional infidelity, whereas males perceive that their partner will more likely engage in sexual infidelity (Urooj et al., 2012).

Additionally, females reported that emotional infidelity as more distressing for the marital relationship, while males report sexual infidelity as more distressing to the marital relationship (Urooj et al., 2012). Interestingly, women engage in more acts of emotional infidelity, while more males engage in sexual infidelity. Research has noted that couples who perceive their partner is engaging in infidelity are more likely to experience conflict, communication issues, and distrust within the marriage. Infidelity has been displayed specific to gender-related differences, and the impact of infidelity can have significant consequences for the romantic relationship. Kachadourian et al. (2015) noted that

experiencing infidelity in the marriage and the thought of thinking that the partner will engage in infidelity is just as harmful to the romantic relationship.

Information on Demographics

Participants in this study were military spouses either from among the 1,669,941 individuals married to an active-duty member or the 1,059,220 individuals married to a reservist or guard member (DOD, 2016). A majority of the active-duty member population is between the ages of 18-25, and their spouses' tend to fall into the same age range with delineations falling at 18-25 years old (25.1%), 26-30 years old (25.3%), 31-35 years old (21.5%), 36-40 years old (14.3%), and 41 and older (13.7%) (DOD, 2016).

Male enlisted personnel and officers are more likely to be married than female service members (Gleason & Beck, 2017). Therefore, the majority of military spouses are female, and a smaller percentage are male (DOD, 2015). For instance, of all military branch marriages, 560,175 of the spouses are female, while 51,192 of the spouses are male. (DOD, 2016; DOD, 2017). Thus, a majority of military spouses are females in young adulthood (DOD, 2017; Hogan & Seifert, 2010).

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed account of current professional literature about the influential factors of relationship issues experienced in military marriages. The major themes within the literature encompass the nature of the deployment, attachment, and infidelity as a primary relationship issue with the focus population. Particularly, research noted that deployment has significant periods in which changes occur for both the military spouse and the active-duty member. Additionally, deployments have specific

factors that have been implicated as risks leading to marital strain, such as the length of deployment, multiple deployments, and combat exposure.

Deployment is a challenging time for the military couples in which the romantic relationship may best be understood through how the couple maintains the emotional connection by their attachment towards one another (Knobloch & Theiss, 2012). A multitude of research focused on how military spouses cope with the separation, and attachments that are noted as an essential factor in understanding how military spouses engage with or disengage from their romantic partner during deployment. Furthermore, the stressors on relationships, such as divorce and infidelity, experienced during deployments have been noted.

Research on infidelity has not examined both types of perceptions of infidelity that can occur, emotional and sexual infidelity. Primarily, research on infidelity has focused on the sexual forms of infidelity, and further research is needed to compare the differences between emotional and sexual infidelity. Thus, this study examined the gap in the literature by identifying the military spouse's attachment and his/her perception of infidelity during deployment; emotional and sexual infidelity were examined separately.

Chapter 3 covers the detailed research design and approach, including data collection methods, analysis, the instruments utilized, and a description of the setting and sample and concludes with the threats validity and the protection of the participants' rights.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to examine relationships of attachment and perceptions of infidelity in military spouses who had experienced an active-duty member's deployment. The results of this study were used to evaluate the strength of the relationship between military spouses' attachment and their perceptions of infidelity to better understand this relationship and the effect that perception of infidelity has on attachment. As stated, researchers have indicated that the perception of infidelity is an important area of research and that the perception of infidelity can be just as detrimental to a relationship as the act of infidelity itself. Cafferky and Shi (2015) suggested that attachments are related to the emotional connection within romantic relationships and that when this emotional connection is weakened, relationship problems may occur (Kachadourian et al., 2015).

This chapter provides the research design and rationale for this study. Furthermore, this chapter addresses the study methodology, including the population, sampling process, procedure for recruitment, and data collection process. The methods that were used to recruit military spouses, as well as the step-by-step procedures of the study, are highlighted so that these processes can be replicated in future research. Lastly, ethical considerations for the procedures for data collection, data analysis, and statistical validity are discussed, along with the steps that were taken to stay within the ethical guidelines of the code of conduct for psychological research.

Research Design and Rationale

This quantitative study used a nonexperimental design with correlation analyses of the independent variable (IV) and the dependent variable (DV). The purpose of this study was to collect data using reliable and validly published instruments to determine the relationships between the following variables—the perception of infidelity (DV) and the attachment of the military spouse (IV)—while the type of deployment, gender, length of deployment, ethnicity, and military affiliation were used as criterion variables. Thus, the regression models analyzed the strength of the IV on the DV.

The most common approach to this type of study is to use a nonexperimental design. This type of design was used due to the advantages of effective and shorter data collection times. This design provides a researcher with online survey methods to achieve data collection in a fast manner while allowing for the ability to have access to a diverse population (Creswell, 2009). Lastly, this experimental design is noninvasive, in that it provides the participant with more ease to participate because there are no experimental interventions or treatments provided while there is also a more comfortable environment to discuss uncomfortable issues such as infidelity in a noninvasive manner (Frankfort-Nachimas & Frankfort, 2012).

RQ1 and RQ2 focused on the relationship between the DV of perception of infidelity and the IV of attachment with three levels of the IV identified as close, dependent, and anxious. The perception of infidelity was measured by a score obtained from the Infidelity Expectations Questionnaire (IEQ) by Cramer (2008), which provides scores for both emotional and sexual infidelity. The attachment was measured by a score

obtained from the Adult Attachment Scale (AAS) developed by Collins and Read (1990). Thus, both the IV and the DV were continuous scale variables that provided a specific score or value to measure designated variables. Specifically, RQ1 focused on the perception of infidelity in terms of emotional infidelity and the relationship within attachment, while RQ2 focused on sexual infidelity and its relationship to the military spouse's attachment. The criterion variables were measured by participants' responses on a demographic questionnaire (Appendix C).

The selection of the outlined variables called for a nonexperimental design because the variables could not be controlled with experimental methods, and self-report questionnaires were used to determine the criterion for participants as well as the relationships between the variables. A limitation of this design was that I did not have control over the IV. Thus, there was no ability to isolate the IV into experimental and control groups (Creswell, 2009).

For this study, nonprobability convenience sampling was used because military spouses are a specific population, and they have been recruited through social media sites and military affiliations that this population frequents, such as various online military spouse support facebook pages. Thus, in approaching the research questions with a nonexperimental quantitative design, I was not able to divide attachment into different groups but instead made nonrandom assignments based on participant responses. This research design allowed for the DV to be split into both emotional and sexual infidelity, because prior research had not isolated the differences in this DV and its influence on military spouses' attachment (Kachadourian et al., 2015).

Methodology

Population

The target population for this study was military spouses who were married to individuals who served in the armed services. The population for this study focused on married couples due to a significant amount of married individuals being represented within this population, thereby providing more opportunities for recruitment than nonmarried committed relationships. Additionally, married spouses are more likely than nonmarried partners to reside on military bases and were thus more accessible for study recruitment (DOD, 2016). According to the DOD (2017), military spouses married to active-duty personnel are mostly female (92%), and about 50% of spouses are between the ages of 18 and 30 years.

The study was administered via online recruitment methods whereby participants were directed to an online link to participate in the study via Survey Monkey. The use of online measures provided the ability to identify and filter individuals who met the specific requirements for the study. To be able to participate in this study, an individual had to be a military spouse who had experienced at least one deployment. The sampling procedures section provides step-by-step information about how this population was derived.

Sampling Procedures

The statistical software of G*Power© version 3.1.9.2 for Mac OS X was used to identify the appropriate sample size of 159 for the current study. Knobloch et al. (2013) utilized a Cohen's d coefficient ($d = 0.25$) with a similar population. The following

values were used to calculate sample size: effect size (0.25), power (.80), and alpha level (.05), which are explained further in the next section (Creswell, 2009; Fox, 2016). The calculated estimated population size was 159 (Appendix E). The 159 military spouses included individuals who were currently married to or divorced from an active-duty member; additionally, demographics were identified to support a representative sample size. These demographic variables included age, gender, type of deployment, length of deployment, and military affiliation.

Some of the identified demographics were culled from the primary sampling strategy of purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is useful when researchers want a certain population to provide detailed information (Creswell, 2009). For this study, military spouses were purposefully chosen to provide data to address the research questions. According to the research, this population is mostly composed of females between the ages of 18 and 30 years; demographics that were gathered included participants' gender and age.

I used online recruitment methods to obtain a nonprobability stratified sample (Frankfort-Nachimas & Frankfort, 2012). Stratified sampling is used to obtain a specific group of individuals, who are separated into subgroups. As a result, this approach was optimal for obtaining specific criterion measures such as attachment and exposure to deployment (Creswell, 2009). In this study, stratified sampling allowed for the representation of women within the study over men; as a result, 92% of the participants were women, while the remainder were men in keeping with the current demographics of this population (DOD, 2016). Due to the nature of online recruitment methods, another

sampling method used was snowballing procedures. Snowballing procedures were useful in obtaining criterion information that was needed for this study (Creswell, 2009). Thus, in this study, I inquired whether the participants knew any other individuals who could participate in the study.

Online recruitment methods allow for more efficient data collection through faster communication processes and forms of data organization (Creswell, 2009). Such methods can also ensure participant participation and allow access to individuals from different backgrounds. The online recruitment method was beneficial in reaching populations that were not geographically accessible to me, thus providing a more diverse population. The first online recruitment procedure was the use of the Qualtrics participant pool/Survey Monkey system and Walden's SONA participant pool system. Recruitment was also conducted through online flyers and announcements on social media outlets frequented by military spouses (Appendices A and B). The Qualtrics Participant Pool is a paid service, while Survey Monkey is a free service that I used primarily for recruiting military spouses who were not from the Walden SONA system (Qualtrics, 2018). The Walden SONA system is exclusive to students, and military spouses in this domain may differ from the average civilian spouse population due to education level (Walden SONA System, 2018).

For this study, a one-way ANOVA was chosen to account for both the relationship of the IV and DV. Using an effect size of .25, the power was selected at .80 and the error of probability at 0.05, which is the recommended minimum level for analyses (Creswell, 2009). The power analysis was considered appropriate for this study,

as there were two continuous dependent variables (DV), the perception of emotional infidelity, and the perception of sexual infidelity. This IV was measured across three different groups, which were indicated for attachment scores (close, anxious, depend). As a result, the minimum number of participants needed for the study was 159 (Figure 2).

However, after the initial ANOVAs were run, a regression model was determined to be a better fit. Overall, the data that were provided fit a regression model due to having both IV and DV as continuous interval variables. Additionally, the research questions were concerned solely with the variable of attachment and the perception of infidelity, as a result identifying which attachment predicted the probability of perception infidelity. These modifications are discussed in further detail in Chapter 4.

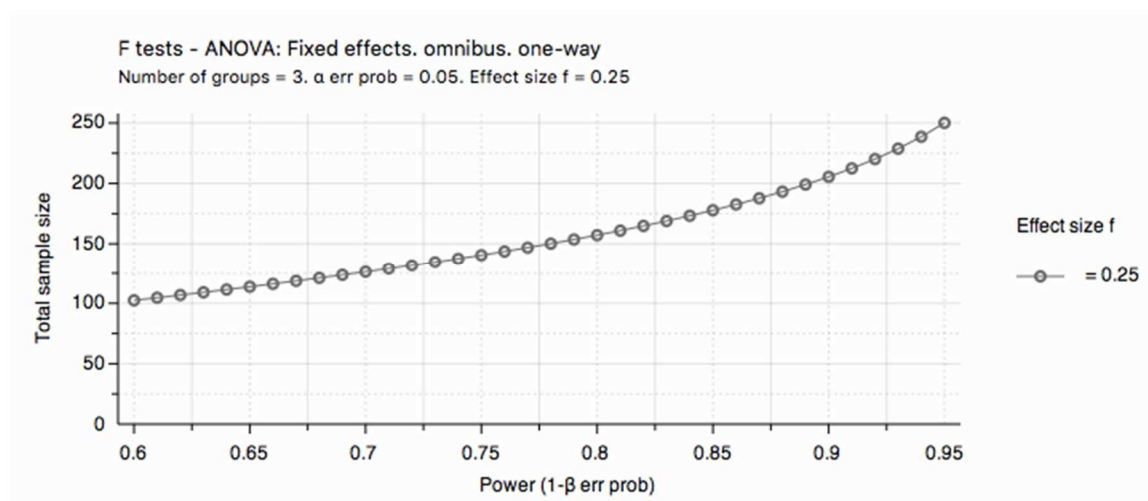


Figure 2. Power analysis for sample size. α err prob = 0.05, Effect size $d = 0.25$.

Sample Size

As indicated previously, the sampling strategies used were purposive, snowball technique, and stratified technique. Sample collection occurred through flyers and online advertisements, directing the population to participate in the study. More specific

recruitment methods are described in the sections below. Through these sampling strategies, each participant was given a website link to the study to complete the AAS, IEQ, and demographic information. Before entering the study, participants were asked questions corresponding to inclusion and exclusion criteria, such as questions pertaining to being married to someone in the armed forces and experiencing deployment, as well as questions concerning gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and age.

Procedure for Recruitment and Participation

The participants were recruited via online methods such as military spouse support pages, advertisements, and announcements made on social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram). Next, the participants were directed from the social media outlet to a Survey Monkey link to complete a survey (Appendices A and B). Once participants read the informed consent, they were then prompted to click a link signifying their agreement to participate in the study and then complete a demographic questionnaire (Appendix C), which included information about their age, gender, education, deployment type, length of deployment, marital status, military affiliation, and ethnicity. After this, participants answered survey questions about the IV and DV of the study that examined attachment and perceptions of infidelity.

As noted on the recruitment flyers, participants were provided with \$5 compensation upon completion of the study (Appendices A and B). I used PayPal to distribute compensation. At the end of the survey, participants were shown my email address (heather.alvarado@waldenu.edu) and were directed to <https://www.paypal.com/us/for-you/transfer-money/request-money>. From there, they

requested their compensation by typing in heather.alvarado@waldenu.edu. During this procedure, participants were encouraged to use a nonidentifying email. If they chose to use a personally identifying email, then their email information was deleted once they received compensation.

Overall, participants were from different geographical locations but were isolated to the U.S. population. All participants were military spouses who have experienced a deployment while residing in the U. S. Once recruited from social media platforms, they were directed to a survey link within the Survey Monkey system.

This sampling strategy provided access to a diverse population containing many military spouses from different military branches and locations. Quantitative research using online recruitment methods has indicated that this method is beneficial to access diverse groups while also allowing for ease of communication (Creswell, 2009).

Approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), committee members, and the University Research Reviewer (URR) was provided to me to gain permission to start data collection. Participants were provided within the informed consent with debriefing procedures upon entering and completing the study. On the informed consent page, participants were told the nature of the study and what type of questions they would be asked. The participants were also informed about how the data were collected and used for the study. Participants were told that they could opt-out of the study at any time and that they could have their results removed from the study at any time.

Within the informed consent process, participants were also informed of risks related to the study. There were minimal risks of being involved in the study. A small risk

within the study that was discussed in the informed consent was that the topic of infidelity could be uncomfortable for some individuals to discuss; at the same time, the need for answering questions related to infidelity as honestly as possible was emphasized. Consequently, if at any moment, individuals felt too uncomfortable to continue, they could withdraw from the study. Participants were also provided with contact information for me and my committee members that they could use if any questions or issues arose for them during the study. Only participants who agreed to the informed consent terms and completed the survey in full provided the data used for the study.

Participants were instructed to respond to three different forms to complete their participation in the study. The first form was a demographic questionnaire indicating social variables that pertained to the study, including gender, age, ethnicity, education, marital status, type of deployment, length of deployment, and military affiliation of the active-duty member in the armed services (Appendix C). Participants were also asked to complete the AAS and IEQ. Once participants completed all sections of the study, they were prompted to a final page to submit their responses and were thanked for their time. This final page also contained my contact information should any questions or concerns arise, debriefing about how the results would be used, and instructions to receive the \$5 compensation. This study did not have follow-up procedures.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

Adult Attachment Scale (AAS). The Adult Attachment Scale (AAS) was created by Collins and Read (1996), and the development of the scale was adapted from work by Hazen and Shaver (1987) and Levy and Davis (1988). The purpose of the scale

is to provide individuals a score of attachment such as close, depend, anxious. In the current study, the attachment was displayed as the emotional attachment of military spouses about their romantic partner during deployment (Table 1). The scale was appropriate for the current study as it identifies several attachment behaviors, and participants' responses to said behaviors. Thus, the attachment scale provides a continuous scale variable that provides an individual score of attachment. I obtained permission to use this scale by contacting the test developer (Appendix D).

Collins and Read (1990) reported both reliability and validity of the AAS by viewing the subscales for Close, Depend, and Anxiety in research with adult romantic relationships. They found Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .69 for Close, .75 for Depend, and .72 for Anxiety. Test-retest correlations for 2 months were .68 for Close, .71 for Depend, and .52 for Anxiety. The scale consists of 18 items, which utilize a Likert scale format from 1 to 5 with 1 being least likely and 5 being most likely. High secure scores range on the Close and Depend subscales but a low score on the Anxiety subscale.

On the other hand, high anxious scores scored high on the Anxiety subscale, and average scores on Close and Depend subscales. Avoidant scores are noted by low scores on Close, Depend, and Anxiety subscales. As indicated in the research questions, individuals with attachment scores that are not secure may have more perception of their partner engaging in infidelity while being deployed.

Similar research studies examining romantic relationships and attachment conducted their own Cronbach's alpha and statistical analyses to establish reliability and validity for their study. Respectively, the alpha values were similar to the original testing

of the scale provided by Collins and Read in its initial test construction (Marchand-Reilly, 2012; Davila et al., 2017).

Infidelity Expectations Questionnaire (IEQ). The Infidelity Expectations Questionnaire (IEQ) developed by Cramer (2008) displays sections regarding emotional infidelity adapted from Descutner and Thelen (1991) on the current scale. The IEQ is designed to identify an individual's perception that his/her romantic partner will commit emotional infidelity or sexual infidelity, which aligns with the current study's interest in military spouses' perceptions about whether the active-duty member will engage in emotional or sexual infidelity (Table 1). The IEQ consists of 20 items total and utilizes a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (partner definitely will not) to 7 (partner definitely will) to rate the likelihood of an unfaithful partner engaging in either emotional intimacy or physical intimacy with another person. The use of this scale was obtained through permission from the test developer(s) through email contact (Appendix D).

The IEQ consists of two sections: 10 emotional items and 10 sexual infidelity items. Cramer (2008) and Leeker and Carlozzi (2014) utilized the IEQ scale to assess infidelity, specifically yielding emotional intimacy items, Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$, and for the sexual items, Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$, for both studies. As a result, this scale has good internal consistency and is considered a continuous scale variable. Cramer (2008) and Leeker and Carlozzi (2014) utilized this scale when studying romantic relationships for both men and women. These researchers also studied different types of romantic relationships, such as the comparison of heterosexual versus same-sex relationships. Both of these studies utilized a manipulation check of obtaining Cronbach's alpha for the

reliability of the scale. The following paragraph will discuss Cramer's (2008) procedures for this scale.

The IEQ displayed good internal reliability when used in previous studies. Cramer (2008) conducted Cronbach's alpha for the emotional items at .79 and the sexual items at .89. Also, ratings of both scales showed reliability in the responses of the individuals rating emotional items as more emotional-based than sexual items at .83, while sexual items were rated as more sexual than emotional at .90. Also, a comparison of ratings of sexual items and emotional items indicated that sex differences were reliable; women placed more importance on emotional items while men placed more emphasis on the sexual items. Also, within-sex differences were reliable in that women were more likely to perceive a partner engaging in sexual infidelity, while men were more like to perceive their partner engaging in emotional infidelity.

Operationalization of Constructs

Table 1

Summary of Operational Constructs of Variables

Operational definitions	Measurement	Scoring
<i>Attachment score</i> refers to the specific emotional connection or attachment an individual has with another that denotes the security of the relationship	18 items, 5-point Likert scale	CLOSE:1 7 9* 13 15* 17* DEPEND:3* 6 8* 14 16*18* ANXIETY:2* 4 5 10 11 12
<i>Perception of infidelity</i> is the belief/perception that someone believes their partner has or will engage in physical or emotional infidelity	20 items, 7-point Likert scale	A (+) score indicates that the civilian spouse perceives the active-duty member to act more emotionally than sexually with another, and a (-) score indicates the reverse relationship
An extended period of time in which an active-duty member is serving in another location than home base	Self-report	Forced choice

*Scored in reverse.

Demographic Questionnaire

Participants also completed a demographic questionnaire developed by myself (Appendix C). The purpose of the questionnaire was to gain more information about the convenience sample and ensure it was a representative sample of the target population. This specific questionnaire was developed to identify primarily if military spouses who participate in the study have experienced a deployment. Deployment is an important factor in the study since deployment is an influential factor in long-term separation between a civilian spouse and active-duty member (Riggs & Riggs, 2011). Additional variables identified below were collected for qualitative purposes and to ensure a sample representative of the population.

There are two different types of variables that are commonly viewed in quantitative research: categorical variables and numerical variables (Creswell, 2009). In the present study, the categorical variables were gender, married status, ethnicity, military status, military affiliation, the longest duration of the deployment, and educational attainment; however, these were used for qualitative purposes in designated a representative sample. Numerical variables within the study were age, years married, and how many times the active member has been deployed. This information has not been used in prior studies. The main objective of the demographic questionnaire was to obtain information on deployment and the representativeness of the sample. While there may be some validity issues that come with standard online data collection procedures, such as participants not understanding the questions or not answer questions truthfully (Creswell,

2009), all of these measures were assessed for validity utilizing reliability coefficient analyses and Cohen's D.

Data Analysis Plan

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Standard GradPack (SPSS™) was used to obtain and process the quantitative data. This program was also used for data cleaning and screening procedures. These data processing techniques consisted of identifying potential outliers, testing Durbin-Watson statistic for the independence of observations, homoscedasticity, and an indication of the linear relationship between variables (Field, 2013).

A one-way ANOVA was used to predict the outcome of the DV, the perception of infidelity about the IV attachment, and type of deployment. The one-way ANOVA was also used to identify covariates or independent variables to analyze whether they could predict the outcome of the DV. In this study, the outcome of the perception of infidelity was affected by the strength IV of attachment. This analysis accounted for the association between variables and a linear relationship between variables. The study did not assume that one IV had a higher strength of the effect. Thus a one-way ANOVA was thought to provide further examination of the strength between the two IV upon the DV (Fields, 2013).

RQ1 and RQ2 were designated for the specific identification of relationships between the civilian spouse's attachment and the perception of emotional infidelity (RQ1) versus sexual infidelity (RQ2), correlational analyses, and regression analysis were used to examine these variables after the initial ANOVAs were run. As indicated in the

demographic questionnaire, type of deployment may be categorized as combat, noncombat overseas, noncombat stateside, or temporary duty station, and all types were examined as a criterion variable for the study. Thus, the military spouse's attachment (IV) will be compared to each condition of the DV, the perception of emotional infidelity (RQ1) versus sexual infidelity (RQ2), which made correlational and regression analyses pertinent for understanding the data.

The one-way ANOVA assumes the DV is normally distributed for each population with the different populations defined the levels of the factors (Fields, 2013). In this case, attachment and type of deployment should have been normally distributed for each level of the DV. The second assumption was that the population variance and covariances among the DV were all the same across levels of the factor. This assumption will be tested by conducting Box M statistic to indicate if there was a violation of normality within variances. A Levene's test was also utilized to gain more information about the Box M statistic. In conducting the one-way ANOVA, descriptive statistics were assessed, such as means, standard deviations, effect sizes, and correlations. In the use of these analyses, the confidence intervals were set at the standard of 95% and a power level of .80 (Fields, 2013).

The ANOVA was not the best fit for the data collected, due to an ANOVA is concerned with categorical variables while the regression utilizes interval variables (Jackson et al., 2013). Linear regression identified the conclusions to the research

questions by understanding the predictive value of attachment among the perception of infidelity by providing interval data for both attachments as well as infidelity perceptions.

Data Assumptions

One of the assumptions made about data used within the one-way ANOVA was that the DV must be both interval and ratio data (Fields, 2013). In the present study, the DV of perception of infidelity meets this assumption from an interval score taken from the IEQ. Another assumption was that the data would have multivariate normality in that there is a normal distribution of both levels of the DV.

Another assumption of the homoscedasticity was that the data derived from the DV have equal variances in all levels of the DV. To test for this assumption, a Durbin-Watson was conducted to identify the independence of observations. Additionally, casewise diagnostics were also conducted to assess the assumption of no outliers within the study. The results of these assumptions will be further discussed in chapter 4.

Restatement of Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and hypotheses of this study were the following:

RQ 1: Is there a relationship between attachment and perceived emotional infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed?

H₀₁: There is no relationship between attachment and perceived emotional infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the AAS and the IEQ.

H_{a1}: There is a relationship between attachment and perceived emotional infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the AAS and the IEQ.

RQ 2: Is there a relationship between attachment and perceived sexual infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed?

H₀₂: There is no relationship between attachment and perceived sexual infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the AAS and the IEQ.

H_{a2}: There is a relationship between attachment and perceived sexual infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed as measured by the AAS and the IEQ.

SPSS was used to conduct correlational coefficients between variables and regression analysis. The regression yielded an F value that provides identification of the strength of the independent variable. There was also additional testing to assess for assumptions of the analysis. Thus, a Durbin-Watson and casewise diagnostics were utilized to identify the appropriate assumptions for this analysis (Fields, 2013). Also, the regression was conducted to provide separation of the three different groups within the IV as scored interval data, which are Close, Anxious, and Depend attachment scores.

Table 2

Power Analysis, Statistics, and Hypotheses

Test type	Statistics	Hypothesis
Regression analysis	= <i>F</i> -tests	RQ1, RQ2,
Durbin-Watson	= Diagnostic	RQ1, RQ2
Casewise	= Assumption testing	RQ1, RQ2

Table 3

Power Analysis Estimated Parameters and Results

Analysis inputs	Statistics
Test family	= <i>F</i> -tests
Statistical test	= ANOVA: Fixed effects, omnibus, one-way
Type of power analysis	= A priori: Compute required sample size
Effect size	= 0.25
Significance level/ α err probability	= 0.05
Power (1- β err probability)	= 0.80
Confidence interval	= 0.95
Number of predictors = 3	
Analysis output: Noncentrality parameter λ	= x
Critical <i>F</i>	= x
Numerator <i>df</i>	= 3
Total sample size	= 159

Threats to Statistical Validity**External Validity**

External validity refers to the study's findings generalizability to the general population (Creswell, 2009). Due to the unique characteristics of military spouses, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to the general population since those populations do not deal with deployments consistently. On the other hand, external validity about the population of interest may be attributed to the general military

population of spouses who are married to active-duty members, thus maintaining the external validity of the study.

Testing reactivity has been displayed as a threat to external validity in that participants have had exposure to interventions or the study in the past. In other words, if a study has a pretest or subsequent trials, this may result in a threat to external validity (Fields, 2013). Fortunately for this study, there were pretests or prior exposure to this study for participants. Interaction of the effects of selection refers to the population, not having a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Jackson, Mitchell, Jolley, & Levine, 2013). For example, if the chosen population consisted of military spouses who had never experienced a deployment, then these findings could not explain the research questions that identify deployment as a criterion variable. Interaction of effects was addressed by identifying an appropriate representative sample and the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Another potential threat to external validity is the specificity of variables. This term refers to the appropriate use of operational definitions of the variables within the study, the timing of the study, and the specificity in determining the population (Jackson et al., 2013). As indicated in Chapters 1 and 2, there were clear descriptions of the definitions of variables and the population used, so these terms remained consistent throughout the study. The nature of the study was a nonexperimental quantitative design. Thus experimental threats to validity were avoided.

Internal Validity

The internal validity of this study was low due to the nature of the study using correlational coefficients from one-way ANOVA. Overall, correlational research is consistent with low internal validity, while experimental research yields high internal validity (Fields, 2013). There were potential threats to the internal validity of the study due to errors within the variables; it was presumed that participants did not have biases related to the IV so that the IV is measured perfectly. It was assumed that some errors about the DV would happen. Within this study, due to a nonexperimental design, there is no control for errors of the IV, which may have limited internal validity (Frankfort-Nachimas & Frankfort, 2012). To avoid selection bias, the study used a nonrandom assignment of the participants to create a convenience sample.

Other potential threats to internal validity included history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, one-way, and selection-maturation interaction. History within the study could have been impacted as combat deployments having decreased (DOD, 2016). Combat exposure is a more intense form of deployment, but active-duty members are still deployed to other locations both within the U. S. and overseas (DOD, 2017). It is possible that combat exposure may have more an effect on romantic relationships, which could have threatened the validity of the study as a general definition of deployment was used.

Another potential threat to validity was maturation. Within this study, it was possible that the results may depict that military spouses have lower infidelity perceptions than expected. This decrease could be attributed to time since there are more programs that have been implemented to help support military personnel and their families through

deployment-related stressors (Riggs & Riggs, 2011). This is a potential limitation that will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

Additional threats to validity were testing and instrumentation. In terms of this study, the participants selected did not have prior experience with the questions being provided. Thus, there was a reduced likelihood that they were previously exposed to questions to have ‘better’ scores. Also, there was one event in which participants were asked to complete the study. Thus there was no pretest or posttest.

In some instances, research studies may obtain information from extreme cases, which may not be generalizable to the population (Jackson et al., 2013). For example, a researcher may purposefully choose spouses who already have experienced marital problems, which may increase the likeliness that the civilian spouse will perceive infidelity. In the present study, there was no information obtained from the participants in terms of their current relationships, thus choosing more extreme relationships was very unlikely.

Construct Validity

Statistical conclusion validity refers to the identification of a relationship between the assessed variables; as a result, the relationship between the variables was assumed to be a reasonable relationship (Creswell, 2009). This was assessed by identifying the values between Type I and Type II errors. Type I errors refer to finding a difference when one truly does not exist, while a Type II error refers to not finding a difference when there is one (Creswell, 2009; Fields, 2013).

The construct validity of the framework was grounded in AT, so the IV was assessed utilizing the Adult Attachment Scale (AAS). Construct validity also refers to a measurement accurately determining what it is intended to measure (Frankfort & Nachimas, 2014). In this study, AT provides an understanding of the military spouses' emotional attachment with their partner during separation. Mainly, Bowlby (1988) argued that separation anxiety occurs when an individual is separated from his/her attachment figure; as a result, an individual may feel anxious, insecure, or other negative behaviors. In the current study, separation anxiety may have been experienced by the civilian spouse during deployment, which would be indicated by their attachment results (secure, anxious, avoidant).

The other measure used to assess the research questions of the study was the IEQ, which measured the military spouses' perception that the active-duty member may engage in emotional or sexual infidelity during deployment. This measure is also related to AT as the theory posits that individuals form perceptions about themselves and their attachment figure. These perceptions may be moderated by physical proximity to attachment figure in which attachment perceptions shift during times of separation anxiety.

Ethical Procedures

The sample population was collected after IRB approval. In the current study, the research identified the military spouse's perception of infidelity during deployment. Notably, the research problem specifically viewed both emotional infidelity and sexual infidelity as separate constructs. Potentially, the topic of infidelity may have been a

sensitive issue for some participants. It is possible that some individuals may feel uncomfortable or negative feelings toward the issue. Thus, the informed consent process disclosed to participants that they may terminate their participation in the study due to discomfort and that they may omit the results from the study at any time. Individually, military spouses are primarily women, as indicated in the sample and sampling procedures section. This could be a potential bias as the findings of the study cannot be attributed to populations that are dissimilar from the military spouse population.

Institutional Permissions

I gained approval from the IRB upon completing an application that addressed all potential ethical issues within the study as well as indicated how the participants would be derived (Fields, 2013). Research must be ethical, which is why researchers receive institutional permissions and address review boards before engaging in data collection (Creswell, 2009). Facebook permissions were also provided to myself after IRB approval. For example, I inquired to the page administrators from specific Facebook support pages frequented by military spouses if she could post the flyer and provide a link to the survey on their pages (Appendix A). The administrators provided confirmation allowing me to post an announcement on the support page to recruit participants.

Ethical Issues About Research Questions and Purpose

In quantitative research, there must be objectivity and clarity of what the research is assessing. Specifically, operational definitions provide consistency for measuring variables and clarify what is of interest to the study (Jackson et al., 2009). In particular, this study defined the perception of infidelity and how this construct was

measured. Similarly, attachment scores were used to assess the emotional attachment of a military spouse.

Since the purpose of the study was to examine the relationships between military spouse's attachment and their perception of infidelity during the active-duty member's deployment, a potential ethical issue was that the results of the study could not be attributable to current military spouses experiencing deployment. As discussed previously, and due to time constraints and ease of data collection, the criterion variables for military spouses were broad. In other words, military spouses in the current study may have either been currently experiencing a deployment or had experienced one or more deployments in the past. Narrowing the sample to only military spouses currently experiencing deployment would have affected the data collection process by leading to longer intervals. Therefore, for feasibility and efficiency purposes, military spouses who had experienced a deployment in the past were included within the sample, as indicated in the research questions.

Ethical Issues in Data Analysis and Interpretation

This study utilized correlational research modalities; thus, the assumptions of the study cannot be taken as a cause and effect relationship (Creswell, 2009). As described in the Data Analysis section, one-way ANOVA examines the relationships between multiple levels of the IV and the DV; as a result, these relationships cannot be identified as the IV causing the DV, only as indicating that there is a relationship. Also, the one-way ANOVA provides an examination of the strength of IV on the DV. This assumption

also does not reflect that the IV causes the DV, only that there may be a low or high predictive relationship between the two variables.

Ethical Issues in Writing and Disseminating Research

In conducting research, there are assumptions that researchers are to remain objective and honest (Creswell, 2009). In disseminating this current research, it was likely that I maintained objectivity due to committee review and oversight, such as the chairperson, second committee member, and URR member. Also, researchers should report results from other studies in an honest and objective matter and not frame results to meet their objectives (Creswell, 2009). I maintained objectivity in this manner by accurately reporting the data.

Summary

Chapter 3 presented the research methods employed for this study. The study was a quantitative study that examined the relationships between attachment and the perception of both emotional and sexual infidelity in military spouses who have experienced deployment. This chapter presented the research methods, including the research design, setting, and sampling procedures, to provide the organization and planning of how the study was conducted. There was also a discussion of the analysis of the IV, the DV, and the criterion variables of the length of deployment and the type of deployment. The research design, setting, sample, and instrumentation were described in detail. A demographic questionnaire was provided to participants upon entering the study to be certain that participants meet the exclusion and inclusion criterion that was

described in this chapter. Chapter 4 will provide detailed analysis results of the collected data.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between attachment scores (close, depend, anxious) and the perception of emotional and sexual infidelity in military spouses during deployment. The AAS provided information on the IV, and the IEQ provided information on the two levels of the DV. After performing assumption testing on data and identifying the theoretical structure of the research questions, it was determined that the multiple linear regression model was a better fit to answer the designated research questions. Provided below are the research questions:

RQ 1: Is there a relationship between attachment and perceived emotional infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed?

H₀₁: There is no relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived emotional infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

H_{a1}: There is a relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived emotional infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

RQ 2: Is there a relationship between attachment and perceived sexual infidelity in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed?

H₀2: There is no relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived sexual infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

H_a2: There is a relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived sexual infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

The above hypotheses were tested by conducting two separate multiple linear regression analyses. An alpha level of .05 was used to evaluate the significance of the results. The multiple linear regression model was supported by the literature review described in Chapter 2. For example, AT was framed in this study to focus upon the individual's perception of self as well as the individual's perception of others. Consequently, the perception of infidelity provided more information on how the perception of infidelity may be associated with attachment (Bowlby, 1988). In this study, the military spouses' perceptions of infidelity were based on the emotional connection of the military spouses during military separation. The attachment of the military spouse's perception of the active-duty member's infidelity was analyzed through a regression

model predicting which attachment is more likely to be associated with infidelity perceptions.

This chapter presents the specific quantitative method for the collection of the data and results from all analyses addressing the hypotheses and research questions. This chapter begins with a presentation of the descriptive statistics of the study's sample. Next, the results of the study are discussed. This chapter ends with a summary of the significant effects of the research.

Data Collection

I was granted IRB approval on May 13, 2019, with an expiration date of May 22, 2019. The point of saturation for this survey was 163, although additional participants were recruited to ensure that there would be a sufficient number of participants after data screening and cleaning procedures. Upon screening and cleaning the data, incomplete surveys ($n = 170$) were removed and not included in any of the statistical analyses; as a result, 178 participants were used in the statistical analyses of the study.

Once data collection was complete, the raw data were downloaded from Survey Monkey, input into SPSS, and then coded and analyzed by the SPSS software. Overall, 348 military spouses attempted to respond to the survey and agreed to the informed consent; however, only 178 participants completed the survey in full.

Upon completing data collection, there were some discrepancies in regard to the data analysis presented in the original proposal of Chapter 3. For example, the original analysis that was proposed was a one-way ANOVA analysis. After data collection and a conversation with a stats expert from Walden University, it was suggested that a multiple

linear regression would be better suited for how the data were presented. I discussed these changes with my committee, and the committee agreed to use a multiple linear regression analysis rather than ANOVA analyses. There were originally four research questions, and due to the data being presented, it was not necessary to use these research questions, given the main focus of the study being attachment scores and perceptions of infidelity. Thus, Research Questions 3 and 4 were omitted from the original Chapter 3 and are discussed in the remainder of this chapter in the descriptive statistics section. For example, these research questions were focused upon gender and type of deployment, which are better suited to be described within the descriptive statistics section. Thus two research questions were analyzed with the multiple linear regression model identifying the relationship between differing types of attachment and the perception of both emotional and sexual infidelity.

Lastly, only the Survey Monkey system was used for data collection, and due to the fast response rate, the Walden SONA system or the Qualtrics system was not used for data collection purposes. From the completed surveys ($n = 178$), the following descriptive statistics were identified relevant to this study: age, gender, marital status, military affiliation, type of deployment, and length of deployment. The sample included 165 (93.75%) female military spouses and 13 (7%) male military spouses. Within the sample, 134 (81.2%) military spouses were between the ages of 25-35, and the remaining 44 (18.8%) military spouses fell within the 35+ range (Table 3). Of the 178 participants, 2 (1.14%) were single military spouses, 166 (93.18%) were married spouses, four (2.27%) were widowed spouses, two (1.14%) were divorced military spouses, and 4 (2.27%) were

separated spouses. The military spouses' active-duty members' branches of service were as follows: 54 (30.29%) were enlisted in the Army, 41(22.86%) were enlisted in the Air Force, 46 (25.71%) were enlisted in the Marines, 34 (18.86%) were enlisted in the Navy, 3 (1.71%) were enlisted in the Reserve or National Guard, and 1 (0.57%) was enlisted in the Coast Guard. Other demographic variables are included in a full table in Appendix C that were not pertinent to the analysis of the current study.

Military spouses were also asked about the length of their most recent military separation experience. Most deployments ranged from 4-7 months (36.36%) and 8-12 months (34.66%), while the least common lengths of time were 12 months or more (19.89%) and 1-3 months (9.09%; Table 3). One hundred seventy-eight military spouses also defined the type of deployment their partners had experienced. It was found that 41 (22.25%) military spouses had experienced combat separation, 40 (21.41%) military spouses had experienced noncombat overseas separation, 36 (18.55%) military spouses had experienced noncombat stateside separation, and 61 (37.54%) military spouses had experienced temporary duty station separation (Table 3).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Military Spouses

Variable		<i>n</i>	%
Age	25-35	134	81.22
	35+	44	18.78
Gender	Female	165	93.21
	Male	13	6.79
Years married	< 1 than a year	12	6.82
	1-2 years	27	15.34
	3-5 years	50	27.84
	6-10 years	38	21.59
	10+	51	28.41
Marital Status	Single	166	1.14
	Married	4	93.18
	Widowed	2	2.27
	Divorced	4	1.14
	Separated		2.27
Military affiliation	Army	54	30.29
	Air Force	41	22.86
	Marines	46	25.71
	Navy	34	18.86
	Reserve/National Guard	3	1.71
	Coast Guard	1	0.57
Deployment type	Combat	41	22.25
	Noncombat overseas	40	21.41
	Noncombat stateside	36	18.55
	Temporary Duty Station	41	37.54

Note. *N* = 178. All values are rounded to the nearest hundredth. Thus, there may be rounding errors.

Descriptive Statistics of Continuous Variables

The continuous scale variables were calculated through the sums of the relevant survey items, and the items were screened and adjusted for reverse items, as suggested by survey developers (Collins & Read, 1991; Cramer, 2008). The AAS consisted of 18 items ranging from dependent attachment behaviors (2, 5, 7, 14, 16, 18), to close attachment behaviors (1, 6, 8, 12, 13, 17), to anxious attachment behaviors (3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 15). AAS Items 2, 7, 8, 13, 16, 17, and 18 were reverse scored before computing the subscale mean as indicated by the survey authors. Collins and Read (1991) noted that individuals who scored higher than median values were termed as high for that attachment domain.

The IEQ scale consisted of 20 items but was divided into two subscales of 10 items each. Thus, both emotional and sexual infidelity consisted of 10 items each. The continuous variables were examined through standard deviation (*SD*), and the mean of the survey-item questions is summarized in Table 4.

All other descriptive statistics for the continuous variables of interest are presented in Table 4. The skewness and kurtosis values were explored for the variables. The skewness and kurtosis values were not outside the threshold. Outliers were explored through the use of standardized values, with z falling within the -2 to +2 range. Because skewness should fall between the absolute value of 2, kurtosis was also examined, as shown in Table 5. All values fell within normal limits of less than the value of 3 (Fields, 2013; Fox, 2016). Thus, there was no need for additional analyses of outliers within the study.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for the Continuous Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>S_{em}</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Anxious	2.85	1.11	.11	-.05	-1.21
Close	3.26	0.77	.18	.02	-0.43
Depend	2.62	0.77	.15	.03	-0.33
Emotional infidelity	3.44	1.60	1.40	.36	-0.88
Sexual infidelity	3.04	2.01	1.79	.56	-1.12

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha calculates the mean correlation between each pair of items and the number of items making up the scale (Creswell, 2017; Fox, 2016). The alpha values were interpreted through the guidelines suggested by the AAS publishers (Collins & Read, 1991) and the recommended steps for reverse coding from both authors of each scale used in the study (Cramer, 2008). The reliability coefficients are as follows: from .90 to 1 is considered highly correlated, and above-average reliability values fall within the .80 to .89 range. All of the correlation analyses' values for this study fell within the highly reliable range. Therefore, the values were not considered questionable or in need of further correlation analyses. Results for the reliability analysis are presented in Table 6

Table 6

Reliability Statistics

Variable	<i>n</i>	α
Attachment scale	18	.93
Perception of emotional infidelity	10	.92
Perception of sexual infidelity	10	.97

Results of the Basic Data Analysis

After the survey closed, the raw data sets were input into SPSS and were screened and cleaned before advanced analysis. The data sets were specifically screened for completed responses and were also cleaned to identify the overall sample size that was needed to obtain saturation ($n = 178$). Before beginning multiple linear regression analyses, preliminary analyses were run to address assumptions as well as the correlations between the dependent and independent variables. Field (2013) stated that correlation values should fall into one of the following ranges: small correlation (0.1-0.3), moderate correlation (0.3-0.5), and strong correlation (> 0.5). Before the analysis of the research questions, a Pearson correlation analysis was computed to assess the relationship between the IV and the DV. Pearson correlations are appropriate when assessing relationships between continuous scale variables (Fox, 2016).

The individual scores provide a specific value denoting the amount of perception of infidelity as well as the attachment score. The Pearson values for military spouses were as follows: perceptions of sexual infidelity ($r = .48, p = .45$) and emotional infidelity ($r = .47, p = .45$) compared with anxious attachments. These values supported moderate levels of correlation. The values for military spouses' perceptions of sexual infidelity ($r = .16, p = .14$) and emotional infidelity ($r = .20, p = .13$) compared with dependent attachments. These values supported small levels of correlation. The values for military spouses' perceptions of sexual infidelity ($r = .19, p = .10$) and emotional infidelity ($r = .23, p = .13$) compared with close attachments. These values supported small levels of correlation. Table 6 shows that the assumptions for correlation analyses

for continuous variables of attachment scores and perception of infidelity scores were met and did not indicate outliers due to an observed linear relation between attachment scores and perception of infidelity, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ($p > .05$). These assumptions were met by the linear relationship between attachment and perception of infidelity.

Table 7

Correlations Between Study Variables of Attachment and Infidelity Perceptions

Variables		r value for each predictor and -infidelity	r value controlling for all other predictors
Emotional infidelity	Depend	.20	.13
	Close	.23	.13
	Anxious	.48**	.45**
Sexual infidelity	Depend	.16	.14
	Close	.19	.10
	Anxious	.47**	.45**

** $p < .001$.

Assumption Testing

As discussed in Chapter 3, there are assumptions when using multiple linear regression to interpret data. One of the main assumptions of this form of analysis is that a continuous DV variable must be present (Field, 2013). Additionally, there must be two or more IVs, which can be defined as a continuous variable (Fox, 2016). Within this study, these assumptions were met. Overall, both the attachment variable (IV) and the perception of infidelity (DV) were continuous variables; additionally, more than one attachment value was analyzed (close, anxious, and depend).

Then a Durbin-Watson statistic was conducted to understand the independence of observations assumption. This refers to viewing the individual scores and assessing if there is a relation between the scores (Fields, 2013; Fox 2016). This statistic must range from 0-4. Thus, the independence of residuals on emotional infidelity, as assessed by a Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.82. There was also independence of residuals on sexual infidelity, as assessed by a Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.73. Therefore, all expectations were met on this assumption.

Table 8

Multiple Linear Regression Model Assumption Testing Values

Variables		Durbin-Watson	Tolerance (VIF)	<i>r</i> value controlling for all other predictors
Emotional infidelity	Depend	--	.20	.13
	Close	--	.23	.13
	Anxious	1.82	.48**	.45**
Sexual infidelity	Depend	--	.16	.14
	Close	--	.19	.10
	Anxious	1.73	.47**	.45**

** $p < .001$.

Homoscedasticity and Multicollinearity

Homoscedasticity was assessed by visual inspection of a scatterplot regarding attachment and residuals versus unstandardized predicted values (Figure 3). The homoscedasticity assumption was met by evenly distributed residuals in the scatterplot. For example, issues of homoscedasticity may appear if there is closeness between

residuals and appear ‘funnel-shaped’. Fortunately, this assumption was met in which there was even distribution of residuals (Draper & Smith, 1998; Kutner et al., 2005).

Next, testing was also conducted for multicollinearity. Multicollinearity refers to the presence of two or more variables that are highly correlated with one another (Fields, 2016; Fox 2016). This assumption was tested in regression analyses by identifying tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. Tolerance and VIF values must be less than or equal to 1 (Kutner et al., 2005). In the initial regression analysis, this assumption was not met, thus there were more advanced analyses required to correct for this issue. Thus, one level of the IV (depend) was removed and retested for multicollinearity during which the regression VIF and tolerance values were within normal limits.

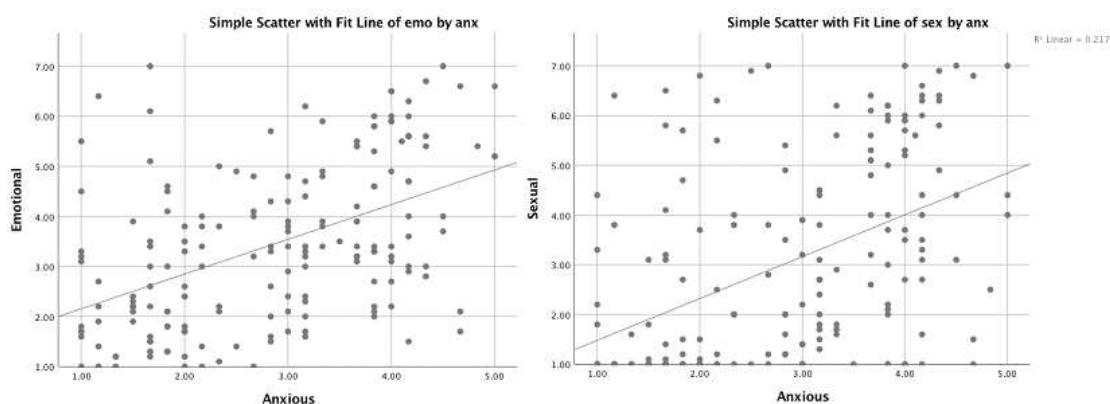


Figure 3. Scatterplots testing for homoscedasticity.

Another important assumption relevant to a regression model is also identifying if the data set has potential outliers. In running the multiple linear regression analysis, the casewise diagnostics were checked to analyze potential outliers and unusual points in the data. Fox (2016) noted that if there are not potential outliers within the data, then the

casewise diagnostics will not be computed, meaning that all SDs are less than three, and no need for further testing is needed. This assumption was met by visual inspection of casewise diagnostics computation in SPSS.

After testing for potential outliers, there was also the identification of leverage points within the data. Leverage points in a regression model need to be less than .2 to meet the assumption (Creswell, 2009). Leverage points greater than .2 are considered risky. The leverage points for this study were below .2, meaning the assumption was met. Lastly, Cook's statistic was conducted in the initial regression model. Cook's Distance values were below 1, and there was no need for further investigation (Field, 2013).

The last assumption reviewed was normality. Normality refers to the values within the study that are normally distributed. In this study, normality was tested by creating a histogram and P-P plot (Figure 4). Within the histogram, normal bell-shaped curves were visible. Additionally, the plot also displayed the linear relationship between the variables. Thus, the assumption of normality has been met (Figure 4).

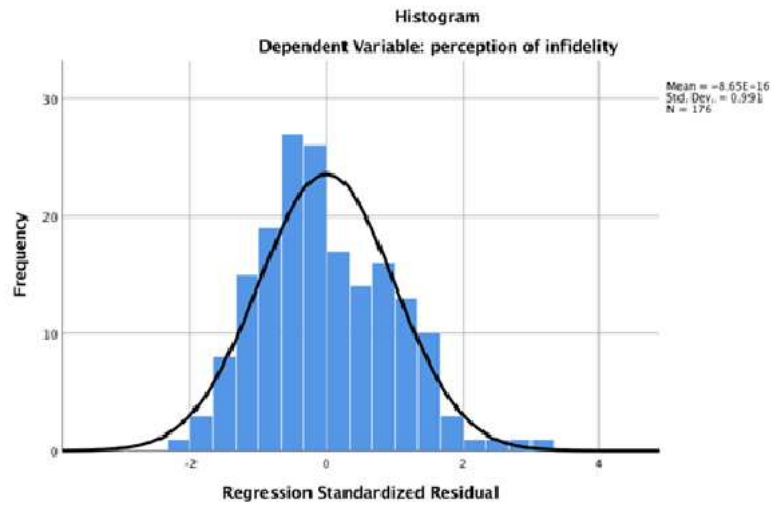


Figure 4. Histogram of normality.

Results

A multiple linear regression model is appropriate when assessing the association between variables as well as the predictive value of the IV in comparison with the DV (Fox, 2016). Two separate regression analyses were executed to address the research questions:

H₀₁: There is no relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived emotional infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

H_{a1}: There is a relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived emotional infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

The second research question identified the relationship between attachment and the perception of sexual infidelity. The hypotheses for the first analysis were:

H₀₂: There is no relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived sexual infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

H_{a2}: There is a relationship between attachment (measured by the AAS) and perceived sexual infidelity (measured by the IEQ) in the marital relationship among military spouses whose active-duty spouses are deployed.

The first research question investigated the relationship between attachment (close, depend, anxious) and the perception of emotional infidelity. The scores from AAS and IEQ were utilized. To approach RQ1, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the prediction of emotional infidelity from attachment (close, depend, anxious). The results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that depend, and close attachments were not one of the statistically significant predictors to the model ($p < .001$). However, the results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed a statistically significant association between anxious attachments. The regression coefficients [$B = .093$, 95% C.I. (.06-.13) $p < .001$] associated with anxious attachments suggests that with each additional anxious attachment score, the perception of emotional infidelity increases by approximately 3.2%. The R^2 value of 0.33 associated with this regression model suggests that the anxious attachments account for 33% of the

variation in overall attachment scores, which means that 67% of the variation in emotional infidelity cannot be explained by anxious attachments alone. Thus, the null hypothesis for the first research question was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was confirmed $F(3, 178) = 18.98, p < .001$.

The second research question investigated the relationship between attachment (close, depend, anxious) and the perception of sexual infidelity. The regression coefficient [$B = .10, 95\% \text{ C.I. } (.06, .15) p < .001$] associated with anxious attachments suggests that with each additional anxious attachment score, the perception of sexual infidelity increases by approximately 3.4%. The R^2 value of 0.30 associated with this regression model suggests that the anxious attachment accounts for 30% of the variation in sexual infidelity, which means that 70% of the variation in overall attachment cannot be explained by anxious attachments alone. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was confirmed $F(3, 178) = 17.31, p < .001$. The means and SDs are presented in Table 8.

Table 9

Perception of Infidelity Multiple Linear Regression

Term	SS	df	F	p
Emotional	111.43	3	18.98	.000*
Residuals	336.56	3		
Sexual	164.73	3	17.31	.000*
Residuals	545.53	3		

* $p < .001$.

Post Hoc Analyses

Since both RQ1 and RQ2 were confirmed, additional analyses were run to confirm the interpretation of the regression model. There were two out of three

attachment scores that were statistically significantly to the prediction ($p < .05$).

Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 9. Overall, according to these correlational values, it is noted that emotional infidelity has a significant relationship to the attachment of the military spouse during the deployment of the military member ($p < .001$). However, sexual infidelity has a stronger correlational relationship on military spouses' attachment during the deployment of the military member in comparison to emotional infidelity ($p < .001$). When comparing all three attachments (depend, close, and anxious), the anxious attachment was found to have higher scores on both emotional and sexual infidelity perceptions in comparison to individuals with depend and close scores.

Table 10

Post Hoc Regression Model Summary

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE_b</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Emotional infidelity	-6.02	.62	--	--
Anxious	.093	.17	.39	.00*
Close	.14	.31	-.32	.334
Depend	.00	.37	.00	.989
Sexual infidelity	-2.28	.79	--	--
Anxious	.10	.02	.35	.00*
Close	.15	.04	.28	.331
Depend	.05	.05	.08	.319

Note. *B* = unstandardized regression coefficient; *SE_b* = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient.

* $p < .001$.

Summary

Multiple linear regression was conducted for each of the research questions in this study. For the first research question, the results showed that there was a significant

effect noted, confirming the alternative hypothesis. Also, the analysis showed a significant effect for the second research question, again rejecting the null hypothesis. Based on the analyses and results conducted in this study, there is evidence to support that the attachment of military spouses is a predictive factor regarding their perceptions of infidelity during their active-duty members' deployments.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the study. Conclusions are made from the findings, and the subsequent impact on social change is discussed. Lastly, Chapter 5 presents recommendations for further research and future action.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Two research questions were included in this study. The first question asked whether there was a relationship between military spouses' attachment and their perception of emotional infidelity during deployment. The second research question concerned whether there were significant differences between the attachment of military spouses and their likelihood of perceiving sexual infidelity during deployment.

It was found that there was a significant correlation between military spouses' attachment and perceptions of infidelity. This study filled a gap in the literature by examining not only the different types of infidelity (emotional and sexual) but also indicating that the perceptions of these two types of infidelity are connected to attachment.

Several key articles provided the basis for the research questions. The available research on military spouses' attachment and relationships described the importance of the spouses' emotional connection during deployment (Allen et al., 2012; Borelli et al., 2014). Researchers have also discussed how military spouses and their active-duty members experience various relationship issues such as marital discord, infidelity, stress, substance-use issues, mental health problems, PTSD, and issues with reintegrating family life when active-duty members return from deployment (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2018; Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2015; Trevillion et al., 2015). Prior research has addressed infidelity as a broad issue and has not separated this challenge into separate categories (Kachadourian et al., 2015), as was done in this study.

Cafferky and Shi (2015) found that the attachment of the military spouse provides an understanding of the romantic relationship as well as how a military spouse copes with deployment and maintains communication with the active-duty member during this time. As stated in AT, there are three styles of attachment: secure, anxious, and avoidant. These connections, according to the IWM of AT, support premises about individuals' emotional connection to their attachment figures and how this emotional connection affects (a) self-perception and (b) the perception of the attachment figure (Ainsworth 1978; Bowlby, 1977). Thus, a secure attachment yields security and trust in the attachment figure, while anxious or avoidant attachments yields insecurity and distrust (Bowlby, 1977, 1982, 1988). Limited information exists on the importance of understanding different perceptions of infidelity, such as emotional and sexual infidelity, in relation to the attachment patterns of military couples (Cafferky & Shi, 2015; Kachadourian et al., 2015). After data analysis, this study identified significant key differences between one attachment and the perception of both emotional and sexual infidelity.

In conclusion, this study was conducted to fill a gap in the research by determining whether there were any differences between the attachment of military spouses and their perception of emotional or sexual infidelity during separation from their partner. This final chapter provides an interpretation of the findings as they relate to the literature review. The chapter also features a discussion of the theoretical framework's relationship to the results. Chapter 5 includes the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research. Lastly, the chapter presents the study's implications for social change.

Interpretation of Findings From the Literature and Current Research

The findings for the first research question focused on the military spouse's perception of emotional infidelity during the active-duty member's deployment. The emotional infidelity aspects analyzed included feeling close to the other person, trusting in the other person, and confiding one's deepest desires in the other person (Urooj et al., 2015). These aspects were analyzed in conjunction with attachment scores. The first regression analysis confirmed the alternative hypothesis.

Consequently, these results displayed a significant effect between attachment and the perception of emotional infidelity. The second research question focused on the sexual aspects of infidelity, such as engaging in sexual acts (kissing, fondling, oral, penetration; Urooj et al., 2015). Perception of sexual infidelity also displayed a significant effect on the attachment of the military spouse.

A review of the literature demonstrated that attachment has an influential role in the relationship between the active-duty member and the military spouse during times of separation due to frequent stressors such as noncommunication, shifting of roles, and lack of physical proximity during deployment (Gleason & Beck, 2017; Kelley et al., 2015). Other research studies have noted that one of the major relational issues experienced by military couples is infidelity (Allen et al., 2012). The two main factors researched in this study were the perception of emotional infidelity and the perception of sexual infidelity among military spouses who had experienced a spouse's deployment.

According to the results of the study, it is apparent that attachment toward a significant other is impactful in how one perceives a partner's actions, especially during times of separation (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2017). Insecure attachments display a higher risk of mental health issues, as well as problems with adapting to separation, as indicated in the literature (Synder et al., 2012). The results of this study supported that individuals with insecure attachments, specifically anxious attachments, are more likely to perceive their partners engaging in infidelity acts. More specifically, military spouses with anxious attachments are more likely to perceive sexual infidelity rather than emotional infidelity, which can indicate that sexual infidelity places a higher risk on their marital relationship or has a level of importance to the individual (Cramer, 2008). Although sexual-infidelity perceptions have a stronger predictive relationship within individuals with anxious attachments, these individuals also perceive emotional infidelity.

These results supported AT, which describes how attached individuals regulate closeness to the attachment figure through physical means (Bowlby, 1982). Military spouses frequently experience physical separation from their partners, with physical separation being closely related to AT. AT supports that in times of separation from attachment figures, individuals engage in attachment behaviors to either increase or decrease feelings of closeness (Bowlby, 1997). Consequently, sexual infidelity is more closely aligned with physical contacts, such as physical proximity that increases the likelihood of this act (Urooj et al., 2015). Thus, military spouses experiencing physical separation from their partners could be an explanation as to why sexual infidelity is

perceived more than emotional infidelity due to couples not having the ability to engage physically in a sexual manner (Donovan & Emmers-Sommer, 2012; Fincham & May, 2017). With these findings in mind, it is important to note that anxious attachments could be more at risk of negative stressors such as mental health challenges or social and relational challenges, which are described in the recommendations for further research (Borelli et al., 2014; Marchand-Reilly, 2012; Marini et al., 2017).

Interpretation of Findings From the Theoretical Framework and Research Findings

As mentioned in Chapter 2, attachment is an influential factor in the stability and satisfaction of military marriages. Bowlby (1988) described early attachment relationships as not only an important aspect of early development but also as affecting an individual throughout his or her lifespan. While this study was concerned with adult attachments within romantic relationships, Bowlby's theory is grounded in early childhood attachment relations. The attachment connections that are made in children ultimately influence these children as adults in their future relationships, especially in how they choose romantic partners, think about themselves, perceive their partners, and interact with their romantic partners (Donovan & Emmers-Sommer, 2012; Fincham & May, 2017).

Bowlby (1977) suggested that early attachment makes up an individual's IWM of how the "self" and others are perceived. Bowlby noted in this tenet that the IWM facilitates how individuals respond, react, and think about their attachment figures. As a result, attachment relations are revealed in times of separation from the attachment figure through how individuals attempt to maintain proximity to the attachment figure (Bowlby,

1988). For this study's population of military spouses, proximity was a challenge due to deployment, during which they were continuously faced with communication challenges and feeling detached from the active-duty member (Jordan, 2011). The literature indicates that military spouses who experienced deployment engaged in differing behaviors, including attempts to remain close to the active-duty member or avoiding contact so as not to feel abandoned or experience negative feelings (Synder et al., 2012). Within this study, individuals with insecure attachments, such as anxious attachments, displayed a higher probability of perceiving that their partners would engage in emotional and sexual infidelity acts during deployment. These results support AT by finding that military spouses with insecure attachments may engage in negative attachment behaviors or perceive some form of distrust or insecurity from their attachment figure, the active-duty member (Bowlby, 1982).

Limitations

This study has several limitations that must be addressed. The study was quasi-experimental. Thus, covariates and confounding variables could not be controlled (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, the internal validity of the study could have been affected due to the recruitment of participants solely from online platforms. The online recruitment method was chosen due to its ease and the accessibility of this population; however, military spouses who do not use these platforms could have been excluded, thereby potentially limiting study results.

Furthermore, the online platform could have affected the ability of the participants to understand the information presented to them. Because participants in online studies

are unable to interact with myself, some participants may have misunderstood the questions or the study's purpose. This could have led to participants' biases affecting how they responded to questions (Frankfort & Nachimas, 2018).

Some participants may have also engaged in convenience responding or recall biases by inaccurately replying to the questions due to the convenience of responding on an online form. There was also a chance for recall bias as participants may have wanted to appear favorably in the eyes of the research and therefore responded in a socially appropriate manner (Creswell, 2009). Recall bias and social favorability may have been heavy limitations to this study, as the topic of infidelity can be socially uncomfortable.

Due to the lack of face-to-face communication, there is the possibility that some of the participants did not meet the necessary criteria to participate in the study. This study was a paid research study funded by the sole researcher, so some participants might have been more likely to participate due to compensation. In some cases, participants who participate in research studies may not meet the criteria to participate and only participate due to the incentive (Creswell, 2009). Although this is a limitation of paid research studies, I was careful to use only platforms that military spouses frequented, such as special Facebook and Instagram pages that require approval from military spouses to join a page before one can become a member. Thus, instances of participants not being within the parameters of the study were low.

Lastly, the study exclusively used military spouses who had experienced at least one deployment within the last 5 years, rather than researching military spouses currently experiencing deployment. This parameter was chosen due to the time constraints of the

study. This could have affected external validity through recall bias, in that participants had to recollect their experiences from past deployments.

Recommendations

In consideration of this study's limitations, some recommendations that can add to the further study of military deployments and infidelity are discussed. To avoid recall bias in future studies and provide more detailed information about the current experiences of military spouses, future studies are encouraged to examine military spouses who are currently experiencing deployment. Additionally, future studies could recruit military spouses via military bases (Rea et al., 2015; Riviere et al., 2012; Roy et al., 2012). This could provide opportunities for military spouses who do not have access to Internet platforms or are uninterested in online forms of communication. Another recommendation would be to examine the differences between gender and the perceptions of infidelity, such as viewing male military spouses versus female military spouses and their perceptions of infidelity during deployment (Negrusa, Negrusa, & Hosek, 2014; Padden et al., 2013). It could also be beneficial to look at the diverse populations within the military, examining differences such as ethnicity or those related to same-sex couples or transgender couples (Russell, Baker, & McNulty, 2013).

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study add to the literature base concerning perceptions of different types of infidelity, such as emotional and sexual infidelity. Particularly given that there was a significant effect of sexual and emotional infidelity in military spouses with anxious attachments, attachment has an influential role in romantic relationships.

Kachadourian (2015) found that active-duty members who perceived their spouses engaging in infidelity experienced increased negative mental health symptoms. Thus, an individual's mental health can be affected by military stressors as well as the marital relationship. Specifically, the marital relationship receives further stressors not only from the military spouses' mental health but also from challenges related to deployments. However, the goal of this study was to bring awareness of the need for understanding that infidelity is not solely a broad issue by identifying different aspects that may have different influences on individuals, especially in regard to attachment. London et al. (2013) discussed that veterans and veteran spouses who had experienced a form of infidelity were 2 times greater than couples who had no experience within the military, as a result displaying that military stressors can impact not only the individual but also the marital relationship. Thus, the more that the relationship of attachment and perception of infidelity are understood, then challenges of the romantic relationship can be addressed by addressing the attachment bond between two partners.

With these implications in mind, this dissertation provides additional information on the perceptions of military spouses rather than active-duty members, thus showing the need to consider both parties' perceptions and these perceptions' effects on the marital relationship. It is hoped that the findings from this study could be used to educate military spouses on the importance of attachments to their partners during times of separation and how this may impact negative infidelity perceptions.

Conclusion

In this study of anonymous military spouses ($n = 178$) completed a demographics survey, the AAS, and the IEQ. The purpose of this research study was to identify if differing attachment scores predicted the military spouses' perceptions of emotional and sexual infidelity. First, a demographic questionnaire was provided along with two survey measures assessing attachment and infidelity perceptions of military spouses when separated from their loved ones.

Two regression analyses were conducted to address both research questions. The first research question sought to answer if there was a difference between the attachment and the perception of emotional infidelity in military spouses. The second research question sought to answer if there was a difference between the attachment and the perception of sexual infidelity in military spouses. The null hypotheses were rejected, and the alternative hypotheses were accepted.

The Pearson's correlation values were conducted and assessed in which there was a significant relationship found between the attachment scores in regards to individuals' perceptions of emotional and sexual infidelity. Sexual infidelity appeared to have a stronger relationship with one particular attachment: anxious military spouses. Additionally, emotional infidelity regression analyses also revealed a moderate correlation of military spouses with differing attachment scores; however, sexual infidelity, as stated previously, displayed a stronger correlation. In summary, both of the alternative hypotheses were confirmed, and the two null hypotheses were rejected.

While the literature regarding military families and couples is vast and has provided extensive knowledge on the variety of stressors this population faces (Riggs & Riggs, 2011), there were some limitations within the literature. In summation, the findings of this study add to a small portion of the needed research in this field. The body of literature up until the point of this study noted the importance of not only identifying rates of infidelity in military marriages but also the belief that infidelity can be just as impactful as the act of infidelity itself. Overall, this study was a continuation of Kachadourian et al. (2015) and provided focus on military spouses vs. military members. This study not only provided insight into the other party in military marriages but also the comparison of emotional and sexual infidelity about these individuals' attachment scores. The results contribute to social change by adding additional insight into the implications of perceptions of infidelity and attachment relations on military marriages. Military programs and clinicians should begin to look into methods that can strengthen military couples' sexual attachment before, during, and after deployment in order to decrease divorce rates and relationship stressors among this population. The social change aspect of this study could also be used to educate military couples by providing attachment and infidelity related training and the implications it may be associated with in relational issues. This education can support not only the military spouse but also the active-duty member, thus taking on a systems family approach in regards to strengthening attachment.

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Appendix A: Social Forum Post

Hello,

I am a researcher seeking military spouses who are willing to share valuable information regarding perceptions of possible infidelity. Your participation in this study is anonymous. In order to participate in this study, you must currently or previously have been a military spouse (18 and over) and also have experienced a deployment or temporary duty station while your active-duty member was serving. The study is solely viewing the perceptions of infidelity of the military spouse, and this study does not seek to provide causes of infidelity and how to prevent infidelity. After completion of the study you will receive a 5 dollar compensation.

Please reference the informed consent form and survey here (Qualtrics® Link/Survey Monkey Link). You may also share this post! Thank you for your participation consideration!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Preview/?sm=wrv81xlJ7AXIijZZcelEmlMD0WzrtCjBfAW3x8WDMhw9z3ZLihdefrkfb8cy6XW>

Please see the link below on updates and future results of the study:

<https://possibleperceivedinfidelity.blogspot.com/>

Appendix B: Recruitment Flyer



I need you to participate in research regarding attachment and perceptions of possible infidelity

Have you experienced relationship issues?

Would you like to know more about attachment styles and the romantic relationship?

It will only take 15 min and will receive a 5 dollar compensation

Requirements to participate:

You must 18 and over and a prior or current military spouse. You must also have experienced one or more deployments or temporary duty station from an active duty member.

*** Your participation in this study is anonymous. The study is solely viewing the perceptions of infidelity of the military spouse and this study does not seek to provide causes of infidelity and how to prevent infidelity.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Visit survey monkey link to access the study
[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z6PBQP6?Demographics=\[Demographics_value\]&PerceptionInfidelity=\[PerceptionInfidelity_value\]&Attachment=\[Attachment_value\]](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z6PBQP6?Demographics=[Demographics_value]&PerceptionInfidelity=[PerceptionInfidelity_value]&Attachment=[Attachment_value])

Walden University

This research has a 5 dollar compensation. Please see the link below on updates and future results of the study:

<https://possibleperceivedinfidelity.blogspot.com/>

For questions or more detailed description contact the researcher at E-mail Address:

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire

Please complete this demographic section of the survey. It is important that you answer each question carefully and accurately. No personal information was revealed in the study results.

1. Please indicate your age:
 - a. 25-35
 - b. 35+

2. Please indicate your gender ____
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

3. What is your partnered status currently?
Single ____
Married ____
Widowed ____
Divorced ____
Separated ____

4. What is your highest educational attainment?
High school, but no diploma received ____
High school diploma or GED received ____
Some college ____
Bachelors ____
Masters ____
Doctorate ____

5. What is your Ethnicity? (Please select all that apply)
White ____
Black ____
Hispanic ____
Latino/a/x ____
Asian ____
Other ____

6. What is your partner's Ethnicity? (Please select all that apply)
White ____

Black _____
 Hispanic _____
 Latino/a/x _____
 Asian _____
 Other _____

7. What is your spouse's military affiliation?

Army _____
 Air Force _____
 Marine _____
 Navy _____
 Reserve/National Guard _____

8. How many years have you been legally married to the active-duty member spouse? _____

Less than 1 year
 1-2 years
 3-5 years
 6-10 years
 10+

9. How many times has your spouse deployed in the last 10 years? Enter in months _____

10. If you are currently or have experienced deployment please indicate the longest duration of deployment experienced?

Enter in months _____

or

Spouse is currently not deployed _____

11. If you and your spouse have experienced deployment which type of deployment was/is experienced?

Combat _____
 Non-combat overseas _____
 Non-combat stateside _____
 Temporary duty station _____

NOTE: at the end of the survey, participants was shown this link: PayPal was the site that I used to distribute the 5 dollars compensation. Participants at the end of the survey were shown my email address and were directed to <https://www.paypal.com/us/for-you/transfer-money/request-money> and requested by typing my email address for their 5.00 compensation in the study. Participants were encouraged to utilize a non-identifying

email. If they chose to utilize a personal identifying email than there email information was deleted once they received compensation.

Appendix E: Sample Size Calculation Table

Term	Value	SS
Effect size	.25	159
Alpha	.05	
Power	.80	

Note. This analysis was conducted on G*power software.

Appendix F: Demographics Table With Additional Information

Variable		<i>n</i>	%
Age	25-35	134	81.20
	35+	44	18.80
Gender	Female	165	93.21
	Male	13	6.79
Education	High school, no diploma	1	.57
	High school, GED	9	5.11
	Some college	52	28.98
	Bachelor's	59	32.95
	Master's	49	27.27
	Doctorate	9	5.11
Ethnicity of military spouse	White	126	71.02
	Black	7	3.98
	Hispanic	22	12.50
	Latino/a/x	2	1.14
	Asian	12	6.82
	Other/mix	8	4.55
Ethnicity of active-duty member	White	130	73.30
	Black	12	6.82
	Hispanic	15	8.52
	Latino/a/x	2	1.14
	Asian	5	2.84
	Other/mix	13	7.39
Years married	Less than 1 year	12	6.82
	1-2 years	27	15.34
	3-5 years	50	27.84
	6-10 years	38	21.59
	10+	51	28.41
	Single	2	1.14
	Married	166	93.18
	Widowed	4	2.27
	Divorced	2	1.14
	Separated	4	2.27
	Military affiliation	Army	54
Air Force		41	22.86
Marines		46	25.71
Navy		34	18.86
Reserve/National Guard		3	1.71
Coast Guard		1	.57
Deployment type	Combat	41	22.25
	Noncombat overseas	40	21.41
	Noncombat stateside	36	18.55
	Temporary Duty Station	61	37.54

Note. *N* = 178. All values are rounded to nearest hundredth; thus, there may be rounding errors.